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ABSTRACT

This student packet contains readings and exercises for examining the problem of world hunger. Materials, which are suitable for use by high school students, are presented from a Christian perspective. Twelve chapters cover justice and the right to food; causes of hunger (poverty, land use, the international economy, the arms race, resource abuse, misplaced priorities); overcoming hunger; U.S. policy options for overcoming hunger; ethical issues, values, and attitudes surrounding the hunger problem; biblical perspectives on hunger; what the churches are saying and doing; the Bread for the World organization; and prospects for the future. Within each chapter, the following materials are generally included: readings, several hypothetical or actual situations for consideration, statistical information in the form of charts or graphs, questions for reflection and discussion, written exercises, action suggestions, and a prayer activity. (LP)

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ECOLOGY

A Voyage Course
For High School Students

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When I Was Hungry was prepared by Bread for the World Educational Fund. Bread for the World Educational Fund is an educational service on hunger and related issues. It was founded by Bread for the World, and interdenominational movement of Christian citizens who advocate government policies that address the basic causes of hunger. This student packet may be ordered (pre-paid) at $3.00 each from:

Bread for the World Educational Fund
802 Rhode Island Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20018

There is an accompanying teacher's manual and an action packet that goes with this course. The teacher's manual and sells for $6.00 and the action packet for $2.00.

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1. Introduction: Justice for All

Consider The Following And Answer The Questions

A. One day Ms. Jones came into class and asked for the homework assignments. Nancy had not done the assignment and neither had John. Both of them went up to the teacher's desk after class to tell her that they had not done their homework. Both of them are 80 percent average students and both gave the same reason for not having the assignment in on time: "I had to work late last night." Ms. Jones said to Nancy: "That's alright, just get it into me as soon as you can." Then she turned to John and said, "I want that assignment tomorrow morning and also do this additional assignment as a punishment."

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What is your reaction to Ms. Jones' responses to Nancy and John?
2. What word best characterizes her response?
3. Should John be angry at Ms. Jones' response? Why? Why not?
4. John decided to bring the situation to the principal's attention. What do you think of that decision? Would you do the same if you were John?
5. How do you expect a teacher to treat her students with the same kind of a problem?
6. Are there exceptions? Explain your answer.

B. In a small town there are two factories that make buttons. One factory is owned by Mary Smith and the other one is owned by John Browne. Sixty percent of the town's work force of one thousand people work in either of these two factories. Both factories are the same size with each one employing three hundred workers. In the Smith factory the workers earn $6.00 an hour and have one hour for lunch. They have a four week vacation after two years on the job. Ms. Smith meets regularly with the workers of her factory to listen to their grievances and suggestions for improving the factory. In the factory owned by Browne the workers earn $4.00 an hour and have three weeks vacation from the beginning of their employment. Their lunch period is thirty minutes long. Many of the workers have never met the owner. Every Thanksgiving John Browne gives each worker a turkey and a bag of groceries. Ms. Smith does not.

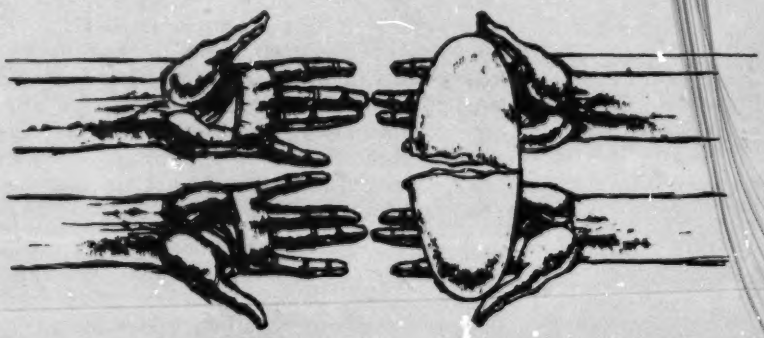
Reflection and Discussion:

1. Which factory would you prefer to work in if you had the choice? Why?
2. What are the differences in the ways that Ms. Smith and Browne run their factories?
3. One of the workers in the Smith factory described her boss as a "just person" while one of the workers in the Browne factory described Browne as a "charitable person." What does Smith do to make the worker call her a "just person"? What does Browne do to make the worker call him a "charitable person"?

C. Recently a small congregation was shocked to learn that one of its senior citizens had been apprehended by the security guard of the supermarket for shoplifting. Henry Cooper had been caught trying to steal a two pound package of hamburger meat from the local supermarket.

Immediately after hearing about his arrest and upcoming trial the pastor of the church went to see Cooper. Cooper explained to the pastor that he had not eaten in three days and that he still had two more weeks to wait before the next social security check came.

At the next meeting of the church council, the pastor asked how the church could help Cooper. Several members of the council suggested that the church should provide him with a basket of food every month. Almost everyone agreed that this was the best thing to do except for Ms. Hughes who was a friend of Cooper and also a senior citizen. She suggested that there was more that the church could do for Cooper and many other people like him. She wanted the council to make an appointment with the congressperson of their district and talk with him about the problems that senior citizens have because of the rising costs of food. She suggested that several people from the council, the pastor, Cooper and herself be the delegation to go to see the representative. There followed a lively debate among the members of the council if they should do what Ms. Hughes had suggested.



Reflection and Discussion:

1. Present arguments for and against going to visit the representative.
2. In your opinion should the members of the church council go to see their representative as Ms. Hughes suggested? Why? Why not?
3. If the council members went to see the representative, would it help Cooper?
4. Is one visit to the representative enough? Is there need for some kind of follow-up with the congressperson?
5. What else could the members of the council do to help Cooper?
6. What is the difference between providing Cooper with a basket of food each month and seeking to get a high social security allotment for him?

Each of the situations above deals with the notion of justice. But what is justice? What makes a situation just or unjust? Let's identify several characteristics associated with justice. Generally when we speak of justice we mean giving people what is their due, what they deserve or ought to have. We often associate the word "fairness" with justice.

In our first situation above what Ms. Jones did to John was not fair. It was unjust. Why? Because John has a right to the same kind of treatment that Nancy received. Since they were both in the same set of circumstances they both should have received the same response from their teacher. Justice requires consistency. The same conditions apply to all people involved. It also requires impartiality.

In the factory example we find a situation where one owner, Mary Smith, is seeking to create a situation where the workers have a greater share in the management of the factory as well as in the profits of the operation. Her behavior points to another characteristic of justice which is the sharing of power. In representative democracies we affirm that people have a right to participation in determining their own lives and destinies. This is very clear in the suggestion that Ms. Hughes makes to the church council that Cooper go with the delegation from the church. By this recommendation she was pointing out the fact that actions which seek to be just should foster people participating in the solutions of their own problems whenever this is possible. She was suggesting that the church has a responsibility to go *with* Cooper but not to go *for* him since he was capable of doing that.

In this third example Ms. Hughes' suggestion regarding a visit to the congressional representative by Cooper and other members of the local congregation points to another idea connected with justice, namely that we are all part of the human family and have a responsibility to foster full human growth and development for all people. This is because people are in solidarity with one another. In his famous letter "On the Development of People" Pope Paul VI expressed this idea:

But each person is a member of society. Each is part of the whole of humankind. It is not just certain individuals, but all persons, who are called to this fullness of development. Civilizations are born, develop and die. But humanity is advancing along the path of history like the waves of a rising tide encroaching gradually on the shore. We have inherited from past generations, and we have benefitted from the work of our contemporaries; for this reason we have obligations toward all, and we cannot refuse to interest ourselves in those who will come after us to enlarge the human family. The reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a duty.

The working definition of justice that we used above, "giving people what is their due," leads us to a discussion of the question, what is due to the human person? Put another way, what rights do people have?

The signers of the Declaration of Independence said that among people's basic rights are the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights enumerates the basic political rights of people. These include the rights to freedom of religion, speech and assembly, and the right to due process of law. These rights are fundamental characteristics of the democratic state.

Christians affirm that every person has the right to a fully human life and to the conditions that make such a life possible. This affirmation comes from what they believe about who God is and what he is doing in history. Christians believe that God is passionately concerned about each person and desires fullness of life for everyone of us. We believe that God is working in history to bring about the reign of his kingdom in the world.

Christians also affirm that they have a special insight into what it means to live a fully human life. For Christians, Jesus is the perfect example of what it means to be a fully human person. In addition to being God's best word about himself, Jesus is also good news for us about the meaning and purpose of human life. He shows us what being human is all about in the way he lived, in what he said and in how he died for us. He gives us the way to live fully human lives.

Exercise

1. What is the difference between "working

with" Mr. Cooper and "working for" Mr. Cooper?
2. What other rights does the U.S. Constitution list?
3. What is the foundation of a Christian understanding of human rights? How is such an understanding different from a view that says the state or government is the source of all human rights?

Jesus' life and ministry can be summed up in the word *love*. He shows us what love is all about and invites us to love one another as he loves us. To be fully human means to love as he loves. In loving as Jesus loved Christians come to know the fullness of life. Jesus characterized his own life as being sent from God to give people the opportunity to live life the way God intends it to be lived:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
> because he has anointed me to preach good news
> to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind,
> to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
> to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.
> (Luke 4:18-19)

Following Christ's example Christians are called to provide that opportunity to all people.

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Make a list of the rights that people have.
2. Which ones of these are necessary to sustain human life and development?
3. Do people have a right to food? Explain your answer.
4. If people have a right to something (i.e. food, education, shelter) is there a corresponding responsibility to guarantee that right? Whose responsibility is it?
5. What responsibilities do I have towards God? towards someone who is suffering? towards my family? towards myself?
6. Are there times when there are apparent conflicts between these responsibilities? How do I resolve such a situation? Explain your answer.

Action Suggestions

1. Examine the newspapers for the next week and collect articles that deal with human rights issues. Be prepared to identify the human rights issue involved in each article.
2. Contact agencies in your community that are helping people achieve their basic human rights. Find out what they are doing. Visit an agency such as a neighborhood food bank.

Prayer Activity

In groups of 6 develop a worship service using the I Corinthians 13:1-13 passage as the centerpiece of that service. Use the service in your group!

Elizabeth Pohl

2. It's a Hungry World

Did you ever stop and think about the world we live in? Some people feel it is a very big place, so big in fact that it's impossible to think about it all at once. Others say that the world is getting smaller and smaller every day. They compare the world to a spaceship or a global village.

When you think about it, the latter group seems more accurate. Two hundred years ago, most people did not travel very far. True, some of our forebearers left Europe, Africa, and Asia to come to the New World, and some within the United States traveled across the mountains and prairies of the continent. But, for the most part, people stayed close to the place where they were born.

If we go back even further in history, this is more true. A person would very likely spend his or her entire life in one town or village, never traveling more than 30 miles from where he or she was born. Most things that a person needed were in the village. The world outside entered very little into the direct experience of most people most of the time.

Things are very different today. Because of the rapid means of communication and transportation, we can be in touch with people and places and events very quickly. We can watch a person walk on the moon as it is actually happening, or have a front row seat at an international tennis match in Australia because of television and communication satellites. Within hours we can travel hundreds of miles. We can start a day in London and be in Chicago in time for dinner. We can talk with a friend in Brazil by telephone almost as easily as we talk to a member of our family across town. It sure does seem like the world is getting smaller.

Nations are in greater communication with one another. They are also increasingly dependent on one another for goods and materials. Japan needs to buy wheat from the United States while, on the other hand, the United States is dependent on Saudi Arabia for oil. The world we live in is becoming increasingly interdependent.

Our World: Find Out What You Know

1. How many people are there in the world?

a) 4 billion c) 8 billion
b) 1 billion d) 10 billion 1. _____

2. One out of _____ people in the world never has enough food for good health.

a) eight c) two
b) ten d) fifteen 2. _____

3._____ percent of developing country residents (excepting China) live without adequate water supplies.

a) 45 c) 88
b) 62 d) 74 3. _____

4. The average protein intake per person in the United States is 106 grams each day. In Bangladesh it is:

a) 60 grams c) 70 grams
b) 40 grams d) 90 grams 4. _____

5. Some 900 million people in the developing nations subsist on____ a year.

a) $40 to $80 c) $500 to $600
b) $100 to $150 d) $5 to $10 5. _____

6. The average life expectancy for men and women in the United States is 71 years. In Bolivia it is:

a) 47 years c) 62 years
b) 55 years d) 70 years 6. _____

7. The infant mortality rate (deaths under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births) is 18 in the United States. In Tanzania it is:

a) 25 c) 52
b) 100 d) 162 7. _____

8. Poor people in the developing countries are paying up to _____ percent of their earnings for food (subsistence diets).

a) 50 c) 85
b) 25 d) 95 8. _____

9. According to the World Bank, in some 80 countries, just over 3 percent of the people own or control_____ percent of the farm land.

a) 20 c) 50
b) 35 d) 80 9. _____

10. What percent of the U.S. Gross National Product goes to foreign assistance?

a) about 5% c) about 35%
b) about 25% d) about 10% 10. _____

For Discussion:

1. What answer from the quiz was most surprising you you? Why?
2. Draw a conclusion about the world in which we live from any five of the questions and answers above.
3. Get three people not in your class to take this quiz. Then compare their answers with yours. What similarities and differences did you notice?

For Your Reaction:

In September of 1973, the then governor of Illinois proclaimed that state a world state, and its citizens world citizens, whose responsibilities extend beyond the boundaries of Illinois. Governor Walker said: "This nuclear age has provided the foundation for world citizenship and for the establishment of permanent peace based on world law. Only through world cooperation can we recognize the common interest of man, free him from the curse of avarice and war, hunger and pollution, and convert the resources of the world to his service."

1. What is your reaction to the governor's action?
2. Do you consider yourself a citizen of the world? Why or why not?
3. What factors are making people more conscious of being part of a global society?
4. What factors hinder people from such a state of consciousness?
5. What can young people do to foster a greater sense of world citizenship?
6. Does Christianity encourage us to think in terms of a global society? Explain your answer.
7. If we begin to think in terms of a global society, what kinds of responsibilities would various nations have? Explain your answer.

It's A Hungry World

There are many ways we can describe our world. Among all of them, however, one thing stands out, hundreds of millions of citizens of this world know hunger and absolute poverty every day of their lives. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that over 455 million people are severely hungry. That means that they do not get enough calories or proteins to make a normal, active and fulfilled life possible. This is how the National Academy of the Sciences described the world situation to the President of the United States in 1977:

There is abundant evidence that large numbers of human beings suffer from malnutrition. Estimates by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank, respectively, suggest that around 450 million and possibly as many as a billion people do not receive sufficient food. Most of these people live in the developing countries. Malnutrition causes millions of premature deaths each year. It is a contributing factor to diseases in many parts of the world, ranging from schistosomiasis in Africa to some kinds of cancer in the United States. In some societies, 40 percent of the children die before they reach the age of five, mostly from nutrition-related causes. A substantial portion of the survivors suffer handicaps of learning, behavior, and work capacity because of inadequate diets and recurring illness.

National Academy of the Sciences
World Food and Nutrition Study[1]

In his book **Bread For The World,** Arthur Simon makes the above statistics more personal:

Hunger is a child with shrivelled limbs and a swollen belly. It is the grief of parents, or a person gone blind for lack of Vitamin A. A single example of hunger is one too many. But in 1974, the United Nations reported that by the most conservative estimate, more than 460 million people are permanently hungry. They don't get enough calories to make a normal life possible and their number is increasing. When famine reaches dramatic proportions, we occasionally view on television the faces of hunger in refugee camps, shanty towns, or crowded city streets. But for the most part, hunger is invisible. Relatively few victims have shrivelled limbs or beg from tourists. Instead they suffer for years in quiet obscurity. Their bodies and often their minds function at half pace. They get sick too often and die too soon. When death arrives, it seldom comes as an undisguised case of starvation. Usually it takes the more merciful form of measles or diarrhea or some other ordinary disease.

In Living Poor *Moritz Thomsen, a 48 year-old farmer from the state of Washington, tells of his experience as a Peace Corps volunteer in a remote village of Ecuador. During a drought, people in a nearby village "were selling their children before they died of hunger; autopsies on the ones who had died revealed stomachs full of roots and dirt." In his own village, the birth of a stillborn child was occasion for jubilant celebration, since it means that someone had become an angelito without all the suffering.*

Arthur Simon
BREAD FOR THE WORLD[2]

The quote from Simon's book reminds us that hungry people are real and their suffering is real. The tragic dimensions of hunger are depicted in the following poem which appeared in the report of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger:

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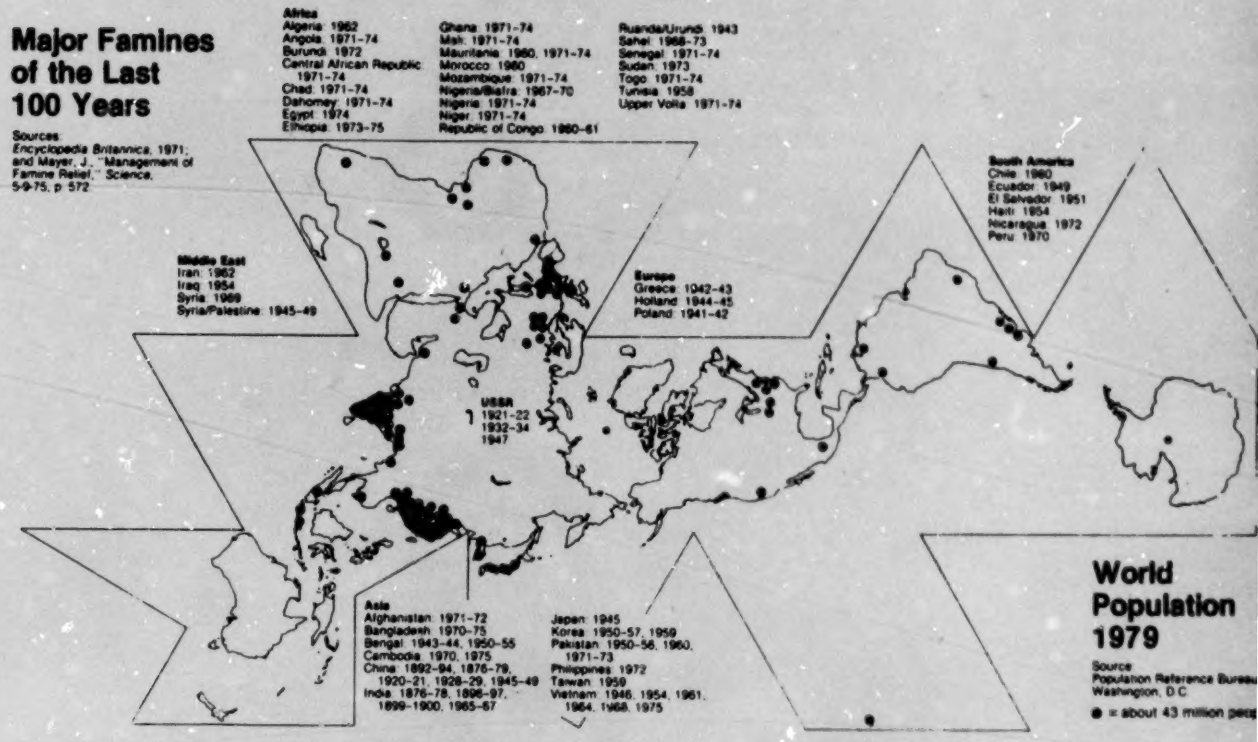
The Arithmetic Of Poverty—
by Appadura (India)'

Decide mother,
who goes without.
Is it Rama, the strongest
or Baca, the weakest
who may not need it much longer or perhaps Sita?
Who may be expendable.
Decide, mother,
kill a part
of yourself
as you resolve the dilemma.
Decide, mother
decide....
and hate.

Discussion and Reflection:

1. Write the first five words that come to mind when you hear the words "hungry people".
2. What is your reaction to the poem "The Arithmetic of Poverty"?
3. What would you do if you were the mother in the poem?

The map below and the list of countries that have been designated "Food Priority Countries" are to help you visualize our world.



World Population, 1979 (in millions)

World	4,321	Latin America	352
Africa	467	North America	244
Asia	2,498	Oceania	23
Europe	483	USSR	264

Medard Gabel, HC-PING: Food for Everyone

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Food Priority Countries

Afghanistan	Gambia	Lesotho	Rwanda
Bangladesh	Guinea	Malagasy Rep.	Senegal
Benin	Guinea-Bissau	Malawi	Sierra Leone
Burma	Guyana	Maldives	Somalia
Cameroon	Haiti	Mali	Sri Lanka
Cape Verde Rep.	Honduras	Mauritania	Sudan
Cent. Afr. Rep.	India	Mozambique	Tanzania
Chad	Indonesia	Nepal	Uganda
Egypt	Kampuchea	Niger	Upper Volta
Ethiopia	Kenya	Pakistan	Yemen AR
El Salvador	Lao PDR	Philippines	Yemen PDR

Designated by the World Food Council, 1976

Exercise

1. Locate five "food priority countries" on a world map.
2. What percentage of the world's population lives on the continent of Africa? of Asia? of North America?
3. Where have the greatest number of famines occurred in the last one hundred years?

Comparing Countries

The charts and the exercises in this section present us with some data about the world that we live in. As you study these charts keep in mind that we are talking about people—people just like you and me.

Gross National Product

One way of understanding the world we live in is to examine a country's Gross National Product (GNP). The GNP is the sum of all its goods and services produced in a year. If one divides the total GNP by the number of people in the country, you arrive at a per capita (per person) GNP which can then be used to compare one country with another.

Chart I: GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT PER CAPITA (U.S. Dollars, for 1977)[4]

Bangladesh	$ 90	Indonesia	$ 300
Bolivia	$ 630	Tanzania	$ 190
Ethiopia	$ 110	U.S.A.	$8,520
France	$7,290		
Haiti	$ 230		
India	$ 150		

Infant Death Rate

Infant death (mortality) rates offer us another way of understanding the world situation. Chart II gives the number of deaths during the first year of life for each one thousand live births.

Chart II: INFANT MORTALITY RATES (Deaths of those under one year of age per 1,000 live births)[5]

Bangladesh	N.A.	India	129
Bolivia	157	Indonesia	137
Ethiopia	165	Tanzania	163
France	13	U.S.A.	15
Haiti	115		

Calories Per Day

"How many calories are there in a piece of strawberry shortcake?" We have often heard questions like that. The person asking the question is probably concerned about being overweight and is trying to lose weight. For many other people in the world, the question of the number of calories in one's daily diet is more a matter of life and death. Chart III gives the average daily caloric intake of nine countries. The minimum daily amount of calories required for normal human activity is 2700 calories.

Chart III: DAILY PER CAPITA CALORIE SUPPLY (calculated by dividing the calorie equivalent of available food supplies in a country by its total population.)[6]

Bangladesh	2,024	India	1,976
Bolivia	1,849	Indonesia	2,126
Ethiopia	1,914	Tanzania	2,003
France	3,411	U.S.A.	3,504
Haiti	2,026		

Exercise

1. What is the relationship between the per capita GNP in Tanzania and in the U.S.A.?
2. Chart I offers one way to appreciate the world we live in. What are the limitations in this method of comparison?
3. What does the information in Chart II suggest about health care facilities in many developing countries?

4. What do you think could be done to reduce the infant mortality rate in developing countries?
5. Draw two conclusions from the information in Chart III.
6. How do you think calories are distributed within poorer countries? What conclusion can you draw about differences within as well as between countries?

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is another way to get some indication of the state of things for a particular country as well as between countries. Chart IV gives us the figures for life expectancy at birth in 1960 and 1977. Life expectancy at birth indicates the number of years newborn children would live if subject to the mortality risks prevailing for the cross section of population at the time of their birth.

Chart IV: LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH[7]

	1960	1977
Bangladesh	42	47
Bolivia	43	52
Ethiopia	36	39
France	70	73
Haiti	42	51
India	43	51
Indonesia	41	48
Tanzania	42	51
U.S.A.	70	73

School Enrollment

At one point or another many of us have thought about dropping out of high school, thinking that anything would be better than going to school. Chart V indicates the percentage enrolled in secondary school of that age group.

Chart V: NUMBERS ENROLLED IN SECONDARY SCHOOL AS A PERCENTAGE OF AGE GROUP[8]

	1960	1976
Bangladesh	8	23
Bolivia	12	32
Ethiopia	1	6
France	46	85
Haiti	4	8
India	20	28
Indonesia	6	20
Tanzania	2	3
U.S.A.	64	91

PQLI

Our last chart is called the "Physical Quality of Life Index" (PQLI). This index was developed by social researchers in an effort to give a more accurate picture of what is happening in a country than that given by the GNP figures. Each country's PQLI is based on an average of its index rates for life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy.

Chart VI: PQLI[9]

Bangladesh	N.A.	India	41
Bolivia	39	Indonesia	48
Ethiopia	22	Tanzania	30
France	95	U.S.A.	95
Haiti	40		

Exercise

1. Compare the chart on life expectancy with that on infant mortality rates. What conclusions can you draw from these comparisons?
2. What does the information in Chart V suggest to you about the importance of education in development? Why do so few people go to secondary schools in developing countries?
3. What do you think might be done to enroll more adolescents in developing countries in secondary schools?

Discussion And Reaction

1. Write an essay which gives your impressions and reactions after reviewing the material in this chapter.
2. Write a letter to a friend describing what you have learned in this section.
3. Imagine that you are a high school student in Tanzania taking this same course. How would you feel about the information you shared in this section? What would you want to see happen in the world?

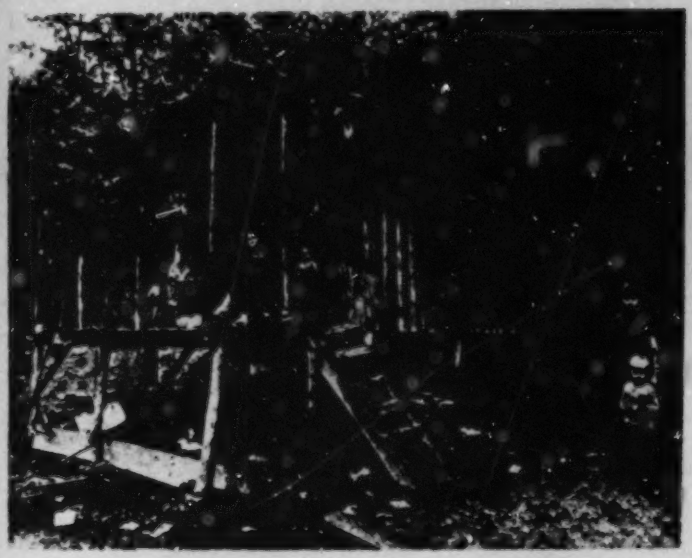
Hungry People In The U.S.A.

Sometimes we forget that there are hungry people here in the United States. Or we pit the hungry in the developing world against the hungry here in our own country by making such comments as "we should take care of our own first and then worry about other people." Who is hungry in the United States? What do we know about the extent of hunger and malnutrition within our own borders? Read the Bread for the World paper "Hungry in the USA" on page and then do the following exercise.

Exercise

1. What have the effects of inflation meant in your own personal life? in the life of your fami-

ly? What does it mean in the lives of the poor of this country?
2. (a) What was the poverty line in the U.S. in October 1979? How is it determined? (b) How does it compare with the figures from the Labor Department? (c) What do you think of the difference between the two figures?
3. Draw two conclusions from the material that you have just read about hunger in the United States.



Closing Prayer-Reflection

Read the following passage from the prophet Isaiah together and then pray for the needs of the world that we live in.

The Lord's Servant

The Lord says,

"Here is my servant, whom I strengthen—
the one I have chosen with whom I am pleased. I have filled him with my spirit, and he will bring justice to every nation.
[2]He will not shout or raise his voice or make loud speeches in the streets.
[3]He will not break off a bent reed nor put out a flickering lamp. He will bring lasting justice to all.
[4]He will not lose hope or courage; he will establish justice on the earth. Distant lands eagerly wait for his teaching."
[5]God created the heavens and stretched them out; he fashioned the earth and all that lives there; he gave life and breath to all its people. And now the Lord God says to his servant,
[6]"I, the Lord, have called you and given you power to see that justice is done on earth. Through you I will make a covenant with all peoples; through you I will bring light to the nations.
[7]You will open the eyes of the blind and set free those who sit in dark prisons.

Footnotes for Chapter 2

[1]National Academy of the Sciences, *World Food and Nutrition Study*, 1977, p. 26.
[2]Arthur Simon, *Bread for the World*(Paulist Press, 1975), pp. 3 & 4.
[3]Presidential Commission on World Hunger, *Overcoming World Hunger: The Challenge Ahead*, March 1980, p. 18.
[4]World Development Report, World Bank, 1979.
[5]Marty McLaughlin, *The U.S. Development Agenda*, 1979.
[6]World Development Report, World Bank, 1979.
[7]World Development Report, World Bank, 1979.
[8]World Development Report, World Bank, 1979. The 1976 percentage for the U.S.A. is actually the figure reported for 1975.
[9]World Development Report, World Bank, 1979.
[10]Marty McLaughlin, *The U.S. Development Agenda*, 1979.

by Barbara Howell
Issue Analyst
Bread for the World

HUNGRY IN THE USA

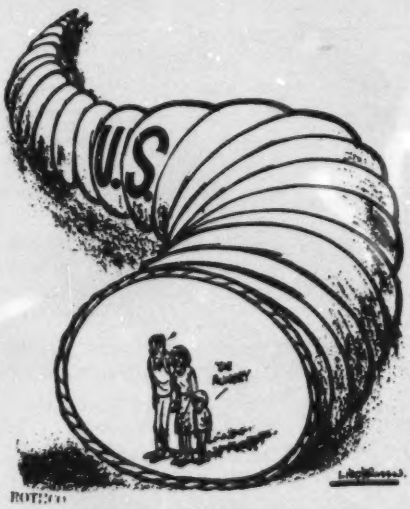
More than a decade has passed since government leaders and the media "discovered" hunger in the United States. Astonishing accounts of hunger, disease and inhuman living conditions showed that existing public assistance programs were not working.

A Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs was formed in 1968 to prepare recommendations for overcoming this social failure. Since then, many federal programs have sought to provide food for those with too little money to buy enough to eat. Annual expenditures for federal food programs have increased from $1 billion in 1969 to over $9 billion in 1979. These food aid programs and other benefits—such as housing subsidies, Medicaid and Medicare—have alleviated some of the worst aspects of poverty for perhaps half of the estimated 25 million poor in the United States.

Yet, today we know surprisingly little about the extent of hunger in the United States. No comprehensive study of malnutrition in this country has been made or planned. U.S. death certificates seldom name "starvation" as the cause of death, but for many citizens malnutrition lowers resistance to fatal disease and leads to physical and mental disabilities.

The present economic recession, continuing double-digit inflation, and high unemployment and underemployment hit hardest those on the economic margins of society. Economists have forecasted that unemployment will rise from 6% in 1979 to well above 7% in 1980.

Inflation translates into decreased food buying power. The poor, who spend an estimated 40% of their income on food,



FOR SOME IT'S PLENTY OF NOTHING

as compared with 16% for the U.S. population as a whole, are most seriously affected.

Jobs

Most U.S. citizens receiving welfare or food assistance are unemployable. They are children, mothers of young children, or persons who are elderly, handicapped, ill or otherwise disabled. Many other poor people are working for wages too low to provide for their needs. A full-time laborer who is paid the federal minimum wage of $2.90 an hour still earns less than poverty-line income of $7160 a year for an urban family of four. In addition more than six million people are currently looking for jobs. The food stamp rolls increase by 700,000 with each 1% rise in the unemployment rate.

Jobs are unequally available. Those lacking power to protect their interests are most likely to be unemployed. Whites find work more easily than blacks. In 1978, white unemployment was 5.2%, while that for blacks was 11.9%. In 1978, white adult male unemployment for those 20 years and over was 3.7%. For black teenagers aged 16 to 19 the rate was 36.3%.

These statistics emphasize the pressing need not only for more jobs with adequate salaries, but also for basic training to develop salable skills and for equal opportunity to those jobs. According to a recent Rand Corporation study, the *wage* gap between whites and blacks is narrowing. The principal reason for this is that more and better education is now available to blacks.

A government commitment to full employment is critical if able-bodied citizens are to be self-reliant. Full employment would help provide the resources for— and a public more receptive to— programs assisting needy people who cannot work.

The Poverty Line

The "poverty line" is set at a level three times the cost of food in the Department of Agriculture's "Thrifty Food Plan." The poverty level for a non-farm family of four is now $7160 a year. This income is far less than the $11,546 the Labor Department says is necessary to maintain its "lower level" standard of living.

The Hidden Poor

Most of the poor and hungry are hidden from those who are more privileged. They can be found in every part of the United States, especially in inner-city slum areas, on economically depressed farms, in the barrios of the Southwest, on Indian reservations and in the South.

Certain groups are more likely to suffer from inadequate diets: blacks, Hispanic Americans, Indians, migrant workers, the elderly, women and children. Two-thirds of all the U.S. poor are white, but members of minorities have a much higher *rate* of poverty than do whites.

About half of the 26 million black U.S. citizens live in the inner city. One third of those 13 million are officially poor, have no jobs and probably receive some public assistance. Many of the rest work for wages so low that they are not much better off than the unemployed.

Half of all Hispanic Americans also live in the inner city. Although it is known that many of these people are poor, data on Hispanic unemployment and poverty levels are unavailable.

The Rural Poor

Despite the movement of poor people from rural to urban areas, which has caused additional problems for central cities, two out of five of the economically deprived live in rural areas where one-third of the U.S. population resides. Many of these poor people do not live near enough to health facilities or social service centers to participate in government aid programs.

The South has a poverty rate twice that of the North. Over 2 million rural blacks have been by-passed by the industrialization that has raised the general economic conditions of the area. Their chances of escaping poverty have been further eroded by the rapid disappearance of black-owned farms. If the present rate of decrease in black ownership of farms continues, there will be none by 1990.

Migrants

Most of the nation's approximately three million migrant farm workers lead subsistance lives at best. Because of their itinerant lives, they often fail to qualify for food programs, despite their obvious need. Several studies have shown high rates of malnutrition, growth retardation, anemia and rickets among farm workers' children. The life expectancy of migrants has been estimated at 49 years compared with the national average of 72 years. Loss of jobs resulting from increased mechanization of farms has forced many migrants and other farm workers into overcrowded city slums where they remain impoverished.

Indians

Hunger is prevalent among Indians on the 250 federal and state reservations, where unemployment runs as high as 40% to 50%. Reservation residents have the lowest per capita income of any group in the United States. Predictably, nutrition-related diseases are widespread; yet only 39% of American Indians on reservations are presently covered by food stamps or food commodities.

In the United States people are hungry not because there is a scarcity of food, but because they are too poor to buy it.

Changes in the food stamp section of the 1977 farm bill, only beginning to be implemented in late 1979, may make the food programs work more effectively for Indians. Tribes will be able to choose food stamps or food commodities, depending on their needs. The legislation stipulates that the Commodity Program provide enough food to guarantee a nutritionally adequate diet for all who participate in it. If state agencies cannot or do not want to run food assistance programs, tribal authorities may administer them.

Indians will need substantial food aid indefinitely. The longer-term need to become self-reliant must be met through the guaranteeing of Indian treaty rights, education, employment training and jobs.

Elderly

13% of the 25 million U.S. poor are over 65. Old people face hunger and malnutrition when small, fixed incomes cannot meet inflation and when ill health prevents them from getting out to buy groceries or to prepare nutritionally balanced meals. More than one quarter of U.S. senior citizens are undernourished, despite the federally guaranteed minimum income program (Supplemental Security Income) begun in 1974.

Children

The U.S. Commission for the International Year of the Child has reported that slightly more than one quarter of the U.S. population under the age of 18—17.5 million children—exists in "dire poverty." Nearly 40% of black children are hungry, lack care and adequate shelter.

The Poorer Sex

U.S. women are more likely to be undernourished than men. Women's generally lower social, political and economic status is directly related to their disproportionate poverty and hunger.

Despite women's major civil rights gains over the last few years, they still lack job training, and they receive less pay than men for the same work. In May 1978 the weekly median income of men was $272; for women it was $166, or 61% of income for men. The 1978 unemployment rate for men was 5.2%, compared with 7.2% for women.

What Needs to Be Done?

Hunger is deeply embedded in the U.S. social and economic structure. Complex programs that have grown up to meet the poverty problem serve some people the government considers "deserving" poor, while ignoring others who suffer equally from the indignities of poverty. Welfare and food programs should be improved to provide some temporary help to the hungry. However, we must move toward fundamental changes that would make these programs unnecessary. National economic planning should guarantee jobs with adequate pay and reasonable working conditions for those who can and should work. For those who cannot work, our economic system should provide an income that will assure a decent life.

In the long run, better income distribution will be necessary. A joint congressional committee on taxation reported in 1978 its findings that the richest quarter of the U.S. population takes home 55% of the nation's wealth, while the poorest quarter has to survive on 5%.

A fundamental step toward assuring the right to food is the development of a comprehensive nutrition strategy that would:

- document who is malnourished;
- find out the extend to which programs we have are meeting the objectives of improving the nutrition of their recipients;
- make the relationship of diet to health a major public concern;
- coordinate and increase nutrition research and education aimed at preventive health care.

What Can We Do?

1. Work for the establishment of a congressionally-mandated nationwide survey to monitor undernutrition in a comprehensive and ongoing manner.
2. Ask others to join you in surveying your community to find out who is hungry and why.
3. Organize a tour of programs which serve hungry people.
4. Invite your Congressperson and the media to participate in your survey and/or tour. Use the results to point to the need for nutritional data on a national scale.
5. Work for the passage of legislation to improve existing food programs and to guarantee full funding of food stamps, school meals, nutrition programs for the elderly, and supplemental feeding for pregnant and nursing women, infants and children (WIC)
6. Work for maximum participation of the eligible and against program abuse.
7. Work for the passage and implementation of legislation to achieve full employment. Press for the implementation of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act. Seek effective adjustment assistance, including job re-training, for U.S. workers who have lost their jobs due to foreign import competition.

In 1969, a decade ago, the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health reported: "Hunger and poverty exist on a disgraceful scale in the United States. The nation's conscience will no longer stand for the toleration of these conditions. Funds must be provided to get food to needy people on an emergency basis. The President and Congress must supply the leadership in closing the gap."

We have made important gains since then. Today there are far fewer grossly malnourished people in this country than there were a decade ago. But hunger and malnutrition have not vanished. And we have no comprehensive information on the extent, severity and distribution of hunger in the United States. We need that information. Then we need to take whatever additional steps are necessary to put an end to hunger.

Resources

Year at the Catholic Worker, by Marc Ellis. The story of one man's experience in living at the Catholic Worker use on New York's Lower East Side. vailable from Paulist Press, 400 Sette ., Paramus, NJ 07652. 1978. $1.95.

ildren of Crisis (Vol. IV): Eskimos, icanos, and Indians, by Robert Coles, D. Portraits of poor children based on l interviews. Boston: Little, Brown d Company. 1977. 587 pp. $15.00.

ealth and Nutrition Examination Sur-y: What It Should and Should Not Do, Harold Orlans. Available from the tional Academy of Public Administra-n, 1225 Connecticut Ave., NW, Wash-gton, DC 20036. 1979. Free.

nger in America: The Federal Re-onse, by Nick Kotz. A report by a team doctors revisiting in 1977 the hunger as "discovered" in 1967. Available m the Field Foundation, 110 E. 85th , New York, NY 10028. First copy free; ditional copies 50¢. 1979.

nger, U.S.A. Citizens' Board of In-ry into Hunger and Malnutrition in U.S. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968 .95). A classic study into the extent of nger in the U.S. and the inadequacy of mestic food legislation. Dated, but ful.

Them Eat Promises: The Politics of nger in America, by Nick Kotz. New rk: Doubleday & Co., 1971 ($1.95). cuments the federal government's ensitivity to U.S. Hunger in the ties, and describes the political process.

erty Profile. Perella, Frederick J. and riellen Procopio. New York: Paulist ss, 1976 ($1.65). Prepared by the edu-ion staff of the Campaign for Human velopment to show who the poor are l where they live, the extent of poverty the U.S., and programs for the poor.

overty in Wealth: The Rich World's or," No. 78, August 1979, *The New ernationalist*. Available from *N.I.*, ntagu House, High Street, Hunting-, PE18 6EP, Cambridgeshire, UK. 50.

port on Domestic Feeding Practices ong Poverty Groups in the U.S. Sur-s the use and misuse of infant formula poor U.S. mothers. Available soon m ICCR, Infant Formula Program, Riverside Drive, New York, NY 27.

Self-Help Works, by Bishop Edward W. O'Rourke. An overview on how disadvantaged people in the United States and abroad have learned to take control of their own lives. A good introduction to the principles of effective self-help programs. Paulist Press, 400 Sette Dr., Paramus, NJ 07652. 1978. $1.95.

Understanding the New Inflation, by Leslie Ellen Nulty. Explores the reasons why conventional anti-inflation programs cannot reduce inflation for most U.S. citizens in the basic necessities—food, housing, medical care and energy. Available from the Exploratory Project for Economic Alternatives, 2000 P St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. 59 pp. $5 for individuals; $10 for non-profits.

Who Really Starves? Women and World Hunger, by Lisa Leghorn and Mary Roodkowsky. Includes study guide. $1.00. Friendship Press, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027.

Women of Crisis: Lives of Struggle and Hope, by Jane and Robert Coles. What it means to be poor and female in the United States. The stories of five women. Delacorte Press/ Seymour Lawrence. 1978. $10.95.

3 Key Groups

The Children's Foundation
1028 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20036:

Barriers to School Breakfast. A report exploring the fact that despite the need congressional intent, and the self-supporting nature of the program, only 205 of U.S. schools offer breakfast. $3.00.
Community Action to End Hunger. A free list of CF publications on all the federal food programs affecting children.

Community Nutrition Institute
1146 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

CNI Weekly, periodical, $25/year.

Food Research and Action Center
2011 Eye St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006:

FRCA's Guide to the Food Stamp Program. 1979. $1.00.
Guide to Welfare Reform. 1979. $1.00.
FRAC's Guide to the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. 1978. $1.00.

Audio Visuals & Study Guides

Excuse Me, America, 16mm color film. 48 min. 1977. A documentary focusing on Dom Helder Camara's visit to poverty areas of the United States. Includes talks with Mother Theresa, Dorothy Day, and Cesar Chavez. Available from Phoenix Films, Inc., 470 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016; or from Archdiocesan Communications Center, 50 Oak Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. $50. Members of the United Church of Christ may obtain free loan from Hunger Coordinator's Office, 16th Floor, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10027.

Faith in a Fight: A Case Study of Economic Injustice. A kit describing Project CHAIN (Combatting Hunger and Injustice Now) developed by members of Faith Presbyterian Church in Dunedin, Florida to address critical needs of migrant farm-workers. Includes a 96-frame color filmstrip with cassette and leader's guide. Available from the Presbyterian Church U.S., Materials Distribution Service, 341 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30308 $11.95.

I Was Hungry and You . . . Study kit focusing on hunger in the United States. Covers a range of topics from study to action. One kit is free. Available from the American Lutheran Church, Division of Service and Mission in America, 422 S. Fifth St., Minneapolis, MN 55415

Melanie, I Am Hungry. 25 minute color slide show with cassette. Depicts the reality of hunger in the United States. Available from Media Services Center, American Lutheran Church. $19.

Who Works . . . and Who Doesn't. An educational packet which includes reprints of articles on employment: "General and Historical;" "Full Employment and Other Issues;" "Unemployment and Its Effects on Various Groups;" "Alternatives;" and a Bibliography and Action Guide." Available from the Boston Industrial Mission, 56 Boylston St., Cambridge, MA 02138. $3.50.

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3. Why Are People Hungry? Part I

In LIVING POOR, Moritz Thomsen, a farmer from the state of Washington, tells of his experience as a Peace Corps volunteer in a remote village of Ecuador:

Instead of fish and rice, we were tucking away aba soup, and rice with abas; abas being a large, fat tasteless bean about 200 percent blander than a lima bean. The evening meal became more and more spiritual. A dozen or so times I staggered over to Alexandro's house, ravenous with hunger and anticipation, to find that supper was one well-centered and naked fried egg cowering on the plate. What made even this more or less tasteless was my knowledge that it was the only egg in the house and that the rest of the family was supping on cups of hot water and brown sugar and platano, an enormous, banana-like monstrosity, about 99 percent starch, which was as tasteless as paper. Eating the only egg in the house while the youngest child slowly wasted away from malnutrition didn't help things either.[1]

Why is Alexandro's family drinking cups of hot water and eating brown sugar and platano rather than eating a dinner where everyone has enough to eat? That is not an easy question to answer. But it is an important one for Alexandro and his family, as well as for the hundreds of millions of other people like them. It is also an important question for us, the well-fed of the world.

No one wants to go to bed hungry every night or see their children slowly starve to death. So why does it continue? Does God cause it to happen? Are the poor just lazy? Is there not enough food for everyone in the world? Or are there other causes?

Getting At The Causes Is Important

Whenever there is a report of a famine, Mary and Jack Hoffman always send an extra contribution to their church's relief agency. They have been doing that for 35 years and have passed on this important value to their children, who also have incorporated such giving into their own lives. In the face of famine and starvation, such efforts are critical, and they deserve to be imitated by all of us.

But how do we work towards creating a world where there is no starvation? In order to do that, we need to examine the causes of hunger. It is only if we know the causes that we can begin to eliminate hunger from the earth. When Pope John Paul II was in the United States in 1979, he made this point:

On many occasions, your nation has gained a well-deserved reputation for generosity, both public and private. Be faithful to that tradition, in keeping with your vast possibilities and present responsibilities. The network of charitable works of each kind that the Church has succeeded in creating here is a valuable means of effectively mobilizing generous undertakings aimed at relieving the situations of distress that continually arise both at home and elsewhere in the world.

But this is not enough. Within the framework of your national institutions and in cooperation with all your compatriots, you will also want to seek out the structural reasons which foster or cause the different forms of poverty in the world and in your own country, so that you can apply the proper remedies.[2]

In this chapter, we will begin to examine some of the basic causes of hunger. These causes are complex and difficult, but they can be sorted out.

POVERTY: A BASIC CAUSE OF HUNGER

The basic cause of hunger in the world today is poverty. Most of the world's hungry people have neither the land to grow their own food nor the money to buy the food they need in the market place. Think about it for a moment. We get our food from the local grocery store or the supermarket, or we grow it ourselves. Many non-farm families in the United States who have some space in their backyards have begun to grow their own fruits and vegetables, while people in our cities have joined together in increasing numbers to turn abandoned lots into urban gardens. We either pur-

chase the food at the store or grow it ourselves on our own land. Hungry people generally lack these opportunities.

This hunger, caused by poverty, has its roots in the present economic, political, and social systems which lock people into poverty. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania made this point at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in July of 1979:

Under the economic, political and social systems at present operating, the world's people are divided into two groups; those with access to its resources, and those without access. Those with access to existing resources—the rich—can afford to invest heavily in the production of greater wealth, so they get richer. The poor have very little to invest; their productivity consequently remains low, and they remain poor. Worse still, the market laws of supply and demand mean that the wealth of the few diverts the world's resources—including the labour of others—from meeting the real but ineffective demand of the poor into satisfying the luxury desires of the rich. Land and labour are used to cultivate grapes instead of grain; palaces are built instead of houses for the workers and peasants.[3]

Nyerere goes on to say:

The automatic market tendency to favour the rich is aggravated by the fact that political power also flows naturally to the "haves" of the world—the educated and those persons or societies which have inherited public or private capital. The result is that publicly produced wealth also benefits the wealthy more than the poor, accrues to the towns rather than to the rural areas, and serves the educated rather than those without academic opportunity or ability. We are all more aware of those problems which affect us than we are of the problems which affect others, and the word "need" is very elastic. Those of us in Government are likely to be closer to the man who "needs" a second car or a University education, than we are to the man whose "need" is for shoes to protect his bare feet or the ability to read and write.

Until now we have, in general, been trying to tackle the problem of poverty—including rural poverty—by directing resources into the existing system and hoping that it will "trickle down" to the poor. Some of it does. When a factory is started, there is always some unemployed person who gets a badly needed job. When more productive seeds are made available to a farmer and his output goes up, he may give a temporary job to his landless neighbour. And so on.

But the major benefit of the new investment stays where it began—with the man who already has,

The Independent

and in proportion to the wealth which he already has. The poor benefit—or sometimes suffer—from the side effects; or they receive the crumbs left over. Even nationally, the net result of a new private investment, described as an asset in the fight against poverty, is frequently a large foreign exchange commitment for the payment of interest and profit, and also the destruction of indigenous and widespread local production systems. Similarly, giving higher education to the wrong person in an exploitative system does not result in the uplifting of the poor, but in their greater exploitation by a more skilled operator![4]

Exercise

1. Getting at the causes is important. Identify another social problem the world faces and list the causes of that problem and its effects.

2. Why is it easier to deal with the effects of the hunger problem than to get at the causes?
3. Draw three conclusions about the present economic and political system from President Nyerere's speech.

Poverty: It's As Old As The Hills

The present systems are rooted in decades and centuries of humankind's division into rich and poor. This division in the human family is based on an uneven distribution of wealth and power. A recent study called "Cultivating Malnutrition" put it this way:

The undernutrition of millions of people in developing countries is in most cases not the result of inadequate food supplies in the world or within the countries where they live. Rather it is a product of poverty resulting directly from the ways in which governments and businesses manage national and international economies. The poor are poor and hunger exists in large part because the continued existence of these poor either serves, or does not threaten, certain vested economic and political interests.[3]

This problem of exploitation and oppression that is suggested in the material above is also seen in the cries of the prophets of the Old Testament against the rich oppressors of their day, several thousands of years ago. Take the prophet Amos, for example:

Listen to this, you that trample on the needy and try to destroy the poor of the country. You say to yourselves, "We can hardly wait for the holy days to be over so that we can sell our grain. When will the Sabbath end, so that we can start selling again? Then we can overcharge, use false measures, and fix the scales to cheat our customers. We can sell worthless wheat at a high price. We'll find a poor man who can't pay his debts, not even the price of a pair of sandals, and we'll buy him as a slave.

The Lord, the God of Israel, has sworn, "I will never forget their evil deeds. . . ." (Amos 8:4-7)

In the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, the rich nations of the North were to conquer and control vast new territories around the world. These conquered lands became colonies which existed primarily for the purpose of making the conquerors rich and powerful. The mother countries removed gold, silver, and other precious resources from the native lands, and forced the colonies to grow crops that could be sold in Europe and North America.

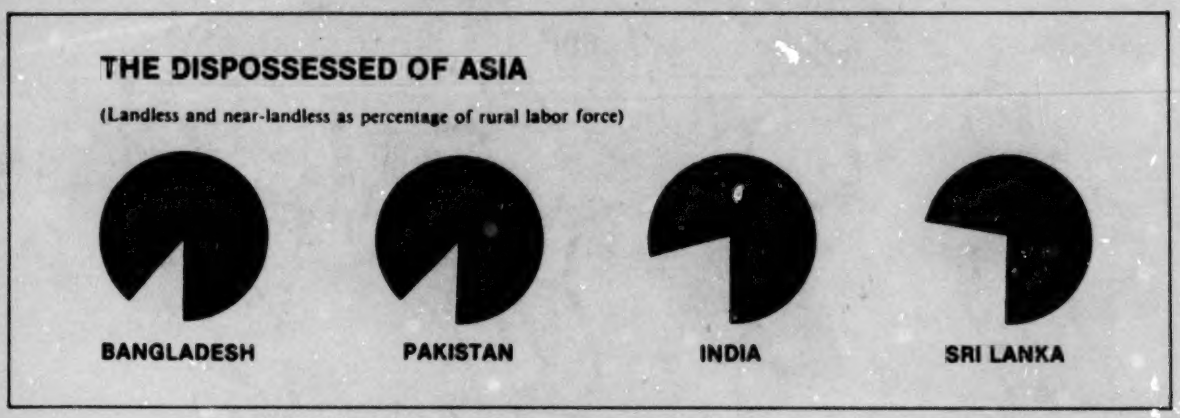
The creation in the colonies of huge export industries around such items as tea or coffee, which were controlled by corporations in the mother countries, often had serious detrimental effects on the local cultures as well as on people's ability to feed themselves.

It's Still Going On

Despite political independence in the 19th and 20th centuries, many former colonies remain trapped in poverty and hunger by economic dependence on the advanced industrialized nations. Decisions are still being made in London about the price of tea or in New York about the price of coffee. As part of an international economy which they are unable to control, many developing countries are simply pawns in the hands of powerful nations or multinational corporations. In its final report, the Presidential Commission on World Hunger makes this point:

While the developing nations themselves must take the most decisive economic and political actions needed to attain equitable economic growth and nutritional security, the success of their efforts will be strongly conditioned by an international economic order which they did not create, but which affects them in important ways. This international order reflects and is shaped primarily by the needs of the major industrialized countries. In trading relationships the industrialized countries largely determine the price for manufactured goods the developing nations import, and for most of the basic commodities they export. . . The decision-making power on international economic issues still remains heavily weighted against the developing countries, which are penalized for having begun the development process late in the

Chart I:[5]



game, well after their predecessors had established the ground rules that do not favor newcomers.[6]

Thus far, we have identified the major cause of hunger to be poverty. We have suggested that this poverty is rooted in the division of the human family into the rich and the poor. This hunger caused by poverty is a legacy from the colonial era. Furthermore, the rules of the game in international trade and investment favor the already rich and industrialized nations. The poor countries of the world are like players entering a game in which they had no say in the making of the rules.

The Landless Of The Earth

Another fundamental cause of hunger is ownership and control of land. Who owns the land? Who controls it and for what purpose? Throughout the developing world, the control of farmland is a principal key to wealth, status and power. Erik Eckholm of the Worldwatch Institute recently wrote:

"Whatever land-tenure pattern prevails in a given area, it is the landless and the near-landless who are on the bottom. Hundreds of millions of families are struggling to improve their lives through agriculture, but they lack secure access to the basis of agricultural life—farmland. Many sell their labor to more fortunate farmers for whatever pittance they can get; others rent land at exorbitant rates under conditions insecure enough to smother incentives for investment and technical progress; still others scratch what produce they can from inadequately sized, often fragmented family plots and then seek other employment in order to make ends meets.

Landless laborers, sharecroppers, and marginal farmers together constitute the majority of rural residents in most countries of Asia and Latin America and are increasing in number in Africa. They have generally been bypassed by the global development process; in fact, development programs not carefully designed to improve their status can worsen it."[7]

Eckholm goes on to point out:

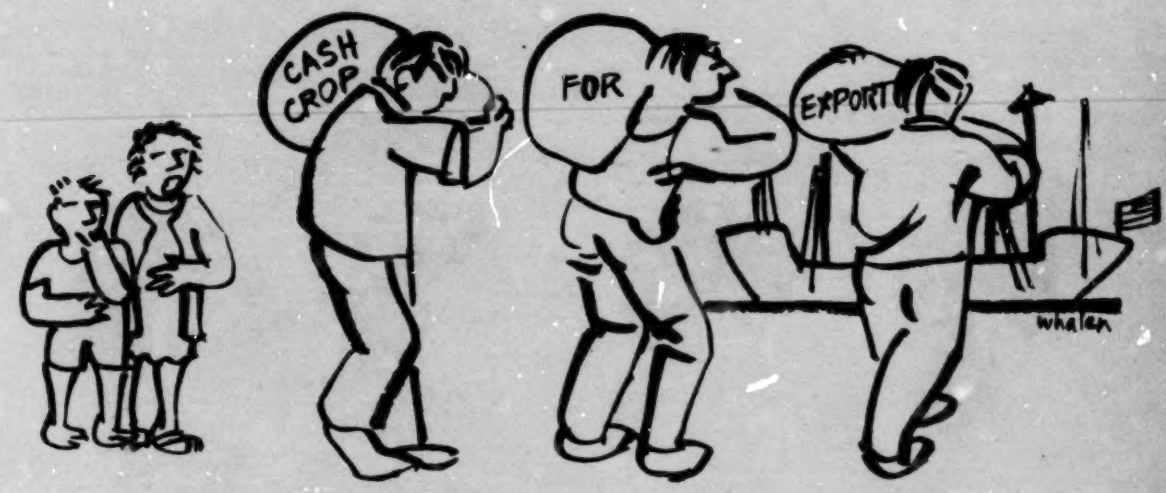
Conservative extrapolations of the available data suggest that altogether more than 600 million people live in rural households that are either completely landless or that lack secure access to adequate farmland. Not coincidentally, this rough figure approaches the World Bank's estimate that nearly 800 million people live in "absolute poverty ...at the very margin of existence." Along with the most destitute urban slum dwellers — themselves usually refugees from rural landlessness — landless laborers and those farming insecure or marginal plots are *the absolutely poor.*[8]

Exercises

1. What would the prophet Amos have to say about the problem of hunger in the world today?
2. What are the chief causes of hunger that have been mentioned so far in this chapter?
3. Draw one conclusion from the information on Chart I about control of the land in any of the four countries cited.

Food Production

"But is there enough food for everybody in the world?" "Can we grow a sufficient amount of food to feed the people of the earth?" These are real questions and they deserve serious consideration. If we could divide the present food supplies evenly, there would be enough food for everyone to eat. We also have it within our capacity to grow much more food than we do at the present time.



Behind these questions is the fact of low agricultural productivity, especially in the least developed or "food priority" countries. As has been pointed out in several places:

While agricultural production in the developing countries has increased considerably since World War II, the situation is far from satisfactory. The total increase has been inadequate in relation to the requirements of an increasing population. Furthermore, the annual rate of increased agricultural production in developing market economies fell to 2.6 percent between 1970-77 from 2.8 percent for the period 1961-1970, with per capita growth in the later period at only 0.4 percent because of the more rapid population growth. Particularly disturbing, however, has been the situation in those countries described as "most seriously affected" (M.S.A.), or the "food priority countries"—those nations identified by the World Food Council as having chronically poor food production, large annual food deficits, severe undernutrition, low per capita incomes, and the potential for significant increases in food production. Their annual rate of growth of agricultural production fell to 1.9 percent in 1970-77 from 2.5 percent in 1961-1970. Because their populations increased at a faster rate, their per capita agricultural production was lower in the 1970's than the 1960's.[10]

Clearly, if we are to work at the causes of hunger, we must address the need for increased agricultural productivity. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the problem of low agricultural productivity cannot be looked at in isolation. Low productivity is connected with all the issues that we have raised thus far in this chapter. The final report of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger was quick to make this point:

Economic, political, and social factors are often the decisive cause of low agricultural productivity. Farmers in developing countries often lack adequate incentives to take advantage of improved farming methods and technology, because government pricing policies may hold down the prices of food crops, restrict access to credit, and fail to bring agricultural inputs, such as fertilizer, within economic reach of poor farmers. Inequitable land tenure patterns reduce or eliminate any incentive to increase production, since poor farmers often work the holdings of absentee landlords and assume all of the risks but receive only a minority share of any benefits.

Agricultural productivity and general economic growth in the developing world are particularly sensitive to international influences. For example, development assistance can contribute significantly to the investment and expertise required for equitable economic growth, while trade earnings can spur efficiency and provide foreign exchange.

Unfortunately, development assistance efforts have often been inadequate or ill-suited to needs of developing nations, and an often unfavorable international trade environment has hindered growth. Unless both the internal and external impediments to economic growth are overcome, the fight against hunger will be unlikely to achieve its goals.[11]

Reflection and Discussion

1. Based on what you have read so far, what is your opinion of each of the following statements? Which one do you most agree with? Why?

A. The reality of hunger is so immense that the only realistic thing to do is to protect

ourselves from also becoming victims of hunger. Given the world that we live in, a "sharing ethic" is impossible and dangerous for our future well-being as a nation.

B. If there is the political will in this country and abroad, it should be possible to overcome the worst aspects of widespread hunger and malnutrition within one generation.

C. The United States is the breadbasket of the world. The solution to the hunger problem is for the U.S. to increase its production and send more food to starving people.

D. Hunger is the symptom; the disease is injustice or underdevelopment. Human beings who are hungry are the victims of injustice. The solution to the problem of hunger is to change the world order.

Footnotes for Chapter 3

[1]Cited in Arthur Simon, *Bread for the World,* pages 4 & 5.

[2]Pope John Paul II, Homily at Yankee Stadium, October 4, 1979.

[3]President Julius Nyerere, "On Rural Development", delivered at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, July 13, 1979.

[4]Ibid.

[5]GAO study, "Cultivating Malnutrition," BFW Background Paper #38, August, 1979.

[6]Presidential Commission on World Hunger, *Overcoming World Hunger: The Challenge Ahead,* March, 1980.

[7]Erik Eckholm, "Land and Hunger Abroad", BFW Background Paper #45, April, 1980.

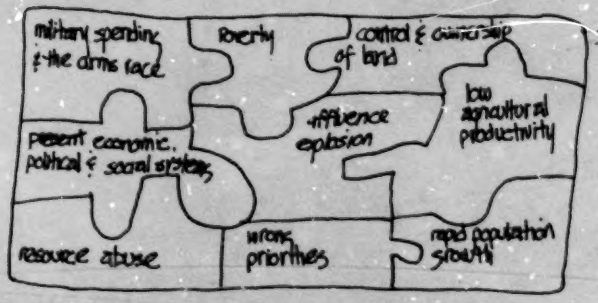
[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Anthony Cernera, "World Food Crisis," America, October 27, 1979.

[11]Presidential Commission on World Hunger. Op. Cit. page 23, 25.

4. Why Are People Hungry? Part II



The causes of hunger are like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. In Chapter Three, we identified some of the major pieces in the puzzle. Now we are going to look at several other pieces in our puzzle. The material in Chapters Three and Four is meant to offer you some insights into the major causes of hunger. However, it is important to remember that these are not the only causes.

You Can't Eat Bullets: The Arms Race and Hunger

On May 3, 1978, Representative Mitchell in the House of Representatives offered an amendment to the resolution on 1979 Budget Targets to "transfer" $4.8 billion in budget authority and $2.8 billion in outlays from defense to domestic programs. This represented a call for a reduction of less than 5% of the military budget. The amendment was rejected by a vote of 313 to 98.

Exercise

1. How would you have voted on this amendment if you were a member of the House of Representatives? Why?
2. Why do you think the amendment was defeated by such a huge margin?
3. Are national security and armed readiness the same thing? Explain your answer.

Shortly after entering the Presidency, Dwight Eisenhower said: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed." The world today is spending an ever-increasing amount of money on arms and weapons, money that could be used to help people work their way out of hunger and poverty. Let's look first at the U.S. military budget and then at the world military budget.

In 1974, the United States spent $78 billion for defense. In 1975, that figure rose to $85 billion. In 1976, the Ford Administration proposed a budget of $96 billion. The 1980 budget earmarked $135.7 billion and the proposed budget for 1981 calls for expenditures of $153.7 billion for military defense. That's more money than we can imagine. Let's try to break that down:

Chart I: U.S. Military Spending in the 1981 Budget [1]

$153,700,000,000 for the year which equals $421,095,616 per day which equals $17,545,650 per hour or $292,427.50 per minute.

The budget for 1981 calls for the spending of $9.5 billion on foreign affairs and only part of that is for development purposes.

In 1979, the nations of the world spent almost $450 billion dollars on arms and weapons while official development aid amounted to less than five percent of this figure or roughly $22 billion. Chart II indicates what some transfer from military spending to development efforts might mean.

Chart II: Transfer of Military Spending[3]

1. The military expenditure of only half a day would suffice to finance the whole malaria eradication programme of the World Health Organization, and less would be needed to conquer river-blindness, which is still the scourge of millions.

2. A modern tank costs about one million dollars: that amount could improve storage facilities for 100,000 tons of rice and thus save 4000 tons or more annually: one person can live on just over a pound of rice a day. The same sum of money could provide 1000 classrooms for 30,000 children.

3. For the price of one jet fighter (20 million dollars) one could set up about 40,000 village pharmaci

4. One-half of one per cent of one year's world military expenditure would pay for all the farm equipment needed to increase food production and approach self-sufficiency in food-deficit low-income countries by 1990.

Abusing The Earth/Wasting The Resources

The desert is spreading in Africa and in North America. The rivers and the air are being polluted with chemicals, killing the fish and changing the climate in ways unknown to us. Every year more and more fertile topsoil is lost through erosion and the lack of flood-control. Cattle and sheep overgraze the land and too many trees are cut down. Poor drainage on agricultural land obstructs the possibility of greater self-reliance in food production. Each of these factors also contributes to the reality of hunger in our world.

Rapid Population Growth

"But aren't there too many people in the world?" "And isn't the solution for those people in India and elsewhere to stop having so many babies?" Behind these questions is the assumption that overpopulation causes hunger and poverty. This is a commonly held view and yet increasingly the experts in this area are realizing that the opposite may very well be the case, namely that *poverty causes overpopulation.* Here's what the Presidential Commission on World Hunger had to say:

Where hunger and poverty prevail, the population growth rate is more likely to increase than to decrease. Under inequitable social and economic conditions, a poor couple's desire for many children is a response to high infant mortality, the need for extra hands to help earn the family's dai-

ly bread and the hope of support in old age. The key to reducing family size is to improve the social conditions...[3]

Poor couples in developing countries rely on surviving sons to care for them in their old age and children to help work in the struggle to gain enough food for the day. Understanding this dynamic in the lives of poor couples helps us to appreciate why having a large family is seen as a good and necessary thing.

If we are to help the world community stabilize the growth of population, this will occur only when we deal effectively with the poverty that causes overpopulation.

Exercise

1. What do you think of the statement, "Poverty causes overpopulation?"
2. Based on the information that you have so far, what suggestions would you make to your congressperson on how the United States could help eliminate hunger in the world?

The Affluence Explosion

Most of the time, we forget that another factor in the hunger puzzle is the consumption patterns of the people of the developed world. We eat too much and waste too much. Each person in the United States consumes, on the average, about 1,850 pounds of grain per year, compared with 400 pounds in the poor countries. While the population of the United States represents six percent of the world's population, we use 34 percent of the earth's resour[illegible]ke energy, for an example. Air conditi[illegible]e United States alone consume as much ene[illegible]oes the entire nation of China, with its over 800 million people. Another aspect of the affluence explosion was ex-

Ten Days for World Development

pressed by Dr. A.H. Borma, former Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization: "The developed world feeds more cereals to its livestock than are consumed as food by all the vast populations of the developing countries together." In 1972, the Soviet Union bought 19 million tons of grain in the United States, suddenly erasing the U.S. surplus of grain. Those purchases were based on a Soviet decision to feed their livestock and keep meat flowing to Soviet tables, despite poor harvests. Grain prices soared and additional millions went hungry. The hungry poor were priced out of the grain markets, where the highest bidder gets the commodities.

Wrong Priorities

In recent years, a number of different groups that have studied the problems of hunger and malnutrition have suggested that another major cause of hunger in the world is the lack of priority given to its elimination by the nations of the world. This is what the Presidential Commission on World Hunger had to say:

The Commission concludes that neither the developing countries, the developed nations nor international institutions have given sufficient priority to ending hunger and malnutrition by addressing its causes. In the developing countries, domestic political problems, national security questions, and industrial development generally have attracted more attention and resources than alleviating poverty or investing in agriculture. In fact, few nations have even made these latter concerns top developmental priorities. The development of remote, backward rural areas has had little political or psychological appeal to civilian or military rulers bent on maintaining their control and modernizing their societies along sophisticated technological and industrial lines. Adopting the priorities of the industrialized world, many Third World leaders have modernized their armies and parts of their cities at the expense of their agriculture, health care and education.[4]

Nor are the developed countries committed to the elimination of hunger.

The United States and other developed nations, too, have placed a very low priority on alleviating world hunger. Since World War II, the industrialized countries have been preoccupied with East-West tensions and sustaining domestic economic growth. These primary concerns have largely determined both the nature and extent of the West's involvement with the developing world. With national security and anti-Communism as paramount concerns, more money has always been available for military assistance, arms transfers and the training of military personnel than for educating teachers, scientists, economists, farmers and health care specialists. And agricultural development, though always a high priority of the foreign aid donors, tended to

The Interdependent

become lost in the larger set of concerns, consequently achieving only uneven and limited success. The hard reality is that the overwhelming majority of the world's hungry people live in countries which have been of limited significance to world grain markets and to Western geopolitical concerns.[5]

What the Commission is suggesting is that the elimination of hunger is a question of political will. We have the capability of eliminating hunger in the world if we make it a priority. We can, we just haven't. The governments of the world have paid lip-service to this goal, but have not really committed themselves to doing it. Our earlier discussion about military spending is a good example of this. In one day, the U.S. spends more money on military purposes than is spent in an entire year by the UN World Food Program. Every 16 hours, the U.S. Defense Department spends more than the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization spend in one year. The United States allocates .27 percent—just over one-fourth of one percent—of its entire gross national product for development assistance in a year. But our government will not make the elimination of hunger a priority unless the people of the country want such a priority. Is the elimination of hunger a priority for us as a people? Consider for a moment the information in Chart III.

U.S. Development Assistance Compared to Expenditures for Selected Items of Personal Consumption — 1978[6] ($ billion)

Alcoholic Beverages	30.9
Tobacco Products	17.9
Household Cleaning Supplies	16.4
Toys and Sport Supplies	11.7
Foreign Travel and Tourist Expenditures Abroad	11.6
Jewelry and Watches	9.3
Admission to Spectator Amusements	7.4
Barber Shops and Beauty Parlors	5.9
Official Development Assistance (ODA)	5.1
Brokerage Charges and Investment Counseling	5.5

(Source: Department of Commerce)

Again, in the words of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger:

In the end, the issue of ending world hunger comes down to a question of political choice—a factor that is no more predictable than the weather, but far more susceptible to human control. The quantities of food and money needed to wipe out hunger are remarkably small in relation to available global resources. The necessary human ingenuity also abounds in all nations of the world, although that quality is too often harnessed to different and often conflicting goals. The Commission agrees with other studies that if the appropriate political choices are made, the world can overcome the worst aspects of hunger and malnutrition by the year 2000. This end can be accomplished through the alleviation of malnutrition in the world of today, in tandem with more fundamental efforts to build a future world in which hunger will be unknown.[7]

Exercise

1. How does the amount of money spent on alcoholic beverages in the United States compare to the amount of money spent on official development assistance? (Refer to Chart III.)
2. If the elimination of hunger is essentially a question of political will or national priority, what steps can be taken to eliminate hunger in the world?
3. In addition to the causes suggested in Chapters Three and Four, can you think of any other causes of hunger in the world?
4. After examining the material in Chapters Three and Four, what would you say is the most important thing that you learned about the causes of world hunger?

Prayer/Reflection

The prophet Amos was a strong critic of his society. The people were not faithful to Yahweh and the rich were oppressing the poor. His words were strong but he also offered the people a vision of hope, of a time when justice would prevail. Read these two passages from the prophet Amos and then imagine what they might mean in our own time.

Amos 8:4-6
Amos 9:11-15

Footnotes for Chapter 4

[1]Calculated by Anthony Cernera, BFW Educational Fund Staff, July, 1980.
[2]Willy Brandt, *North-South: A Program for Survival,* MIT Press, 1980. p. 14.
[3]Presidential Commission on World Hunger, *Overcoming Hunger: The Challenge Ahead,* 1980. p. 25.
[4]Ibid. p. 43.
[5]Ibid.
[6]U.S. International Development Cooperation Agency, *Congressional Presentation,* Fiscal Year 1981. p. 22.
[7]Op. Cit. p. 45.

5. Overcoming Hunger: It's Possible

Elizabeth Pohl

Rome: July 12, 1979

Your Governments, separately and together, have the resources, technology and organizational capacity to overcome poverty and hunger everywhere in the world. You have the power to rekindle the spirit of cooperation that nations must give to this joint task.

With those words, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Edouard Saouma, opened the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Rome on July 12, 1979. Representatives from 145 nations came together to develop a plan of action to foster rural development and land reform as part of the international effort to combat hunger and poverty.

Do we really have the capacity to overcome hunger and poverty in the world? There are so many causes as we saw in Chapters 3 and 4. They are so complex and so difficult. How can we possibly hope to overcome hunger and poverty?

Exercise 1

1. Given what you have learned about the causes of hunger in our world in Chapters 3 and 4, what solutions would you propose to overcome hunger. The solutions you suggest should seek to get at the causes of hunger.
2. Do you think that it is possible for the nations of the world to cooperate with each other in overcoming world poverty and hunger as Director-General Saouma suggested? Explain your answer.

It's Possible

Without denying that the causes of hunger are difficult and complex and that much effort will be required in order to eradicate these causes, it is very important to realize that overcoming hunger is indeed possible. We have the ability to overcome the worst aspects of hunger and malnutrition within a generation.

This chapter will identify some of the major strategies for eliminating hunger that have been proposed. Keep in mind the solutions that you proposed in the exercise above and see how they compare with those suggested by various international conferences, the Presidential Commission on World Hunger and groups active in the fight against hunger.

Overcoming Hunger: A Matter of Political Will

In November of 1974, one hundred thirty-four nations met in Rome for the World Food Conference, asking what could be done about the world hunger crisis. This was the first time in history that representatives from almost every nation on earth gathered to address this central human problem. The fact that the political leaders of the world met to address this crisis underscored an important point: **The solution to the problem of hunger is fundamentally a question of political will.** What does that mean? Simply put, it means that if the nations and the people of the earth put themselves to the task of eliminating world hunger, it could be done. We have the technological know-how and the resources to make it happen. The first step in eliminating hunger will be to make the elimination of hunger a priority of our government's policies, as well as a priority in our own personal lives. This point was underscored in the Report of the National Academy of the Sciences to the President of the United States in 1977: "If there was the political will in this country and abroad the worst aspects of hunger and malnutrition could be wiped out in a generation."

Rural Development and Increasing Productivity

Where should we begin to put our energies? Should we build big factories in developing countries or highways to get people into cities more quickly? Should we train people to work big tractors like those we use in the Mid-West of the United States? What is the solution? What is the proper starting point?

The World Food Conference of 1974 urged the nations of the world to concentrate their efforts on the rural areas of the developing countries. That's where the problems are greatest; that's where the largest numbers of poor and hungry people live; and it is from the rural areas that the masses of people are fleeing to the cities in the often vain hope of finding employment. It is also in the rural areas that the food to feed the people of the earth is to be grown. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania made the same point at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in July of 1979:

For the roots of world poverty, as well as the mass of it, lies in the rural areas. Urban poverty is more obvious —the slums and degradation of some towns in the developing countries force themselves upon the notice of the richest citizen and upon the most casual visitor from other states. But the bulk of the slum inhabitants and the beggars on our streets have migrated to towns because they are pushed out of the rural areas by landlessness, joblessness, and hopelessness. It is therefore in the rural areas that we can most effectively tackle the long-term problems of urban poverty, as well as dealing with the mass of misery which now exists unseen—but not unfelt by its sufferers. Trying to deal with mass poverty by improving conditions and providing work in the towns simply attracts more and more people from the depressed rural areas. You could just as well try to solve the world problems of poverty by allowing the people of the poor Third World nations to migrate to the industrialized countries.

An effective attack on world poverty can only be made by going direct to the rural areas and dealing with the problems there. We have to deal with them in the light of the objective. And that objective is not maximizing the value of production in money terms. The objective is, and must be, the provision of food, clothing, shelter, education, and health services, for everyone, under conditions which provide for universal human dignity.[1]

The World Food Conference called for a plan of **integrated rural development** in the poor countries. According to this Conference, what is needed is a set of basic changes in the social and economic fabric of developing countries to enable (1) the production of more food, (2) more equitable distribution and consumption patterns, and (3) the improved quality of rural life generally. An important vehicle for helping this happen is the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which is designed to boost the food production and living standards of impoverished farm families.

At the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development of 1979, the participating nations stated that the goal of agrarian reform and rural development is the "transformation of rural life and activities in all their economic, social, cultural, institutional, environmental and human aspects. National objectives and strategies to achieve this transformation should focus on the eradication of poverty, including nutritional improvement, and be governed by policies for attaining growth with equity, redistribution of economic and political power, and people's participation."[2] This goal statement highlights the importance of concentrating on the rural areas of the world. The Conference participants also recommended that "each government should formulate its rural development strategies in the context of overall economic and social planning on the basis of its socio-political goals, capabilities and constraints —human, physical and financial." Rural development is not something extra that developing countries need to do; rather, it is a whole way of approaching the need for development.

Land for the People

Directly linked to rural development is the need for agrarian or land reform. The "Declaration of Principles" of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development affirmed that "agrarian reform is a critical component of rural development" and that sustained improvement in rural areas requires "fuller and equitable access to land, water and other natural resources...".[3] Pope John Paul I., in his address to the delegates of the Conference, made the same point: "With conditions as they are within individual countries, one foresees a land reform involving a reorganization of land holdings and the stable and direct assigning of productive areas to the agricultural workers...".[4] President Nyerere, at the same conference, stressed that certain facts needed to be recognized and acted upon:

First among these is that those who own the land will use it for their own benefit. If the land in a state is owned by a small number of people, these can be relied upon to maximize their own private income from that land by using it for whatever crop will bring most profit to themselves. If the land is owned by the peasants, either individually or collectively, it will be used to meet their needs.

Actions which transfer land to the people are an essential first step in the fight against poverty.[5]

Access to Needed Resources

For most of us, giving us a plot of land to work for food would not guarantee us a nutritional diet or sufficient food. We would immediately see that we needed many other inputs to successfully grow food on that land. List some of the kinds of things one would need to grow even a simple vegetable garden.

Now, list some of the things you would need to do farming on a larger scale, to make the large financial investments necessary at planting time, and to keep crops useable until sale or consumption later on.

If you worked hard at the exercise above, you came to see that giving land to the peasants and the landless by itself will not solve the problem. Effective land reform will require a whole host of supports. These include access to credit, to improved seeds and tools, and new knowledge of how to farm better. Again, the words of Julius Nyerere are important on this point:

If poverty is to be abolished in the rural areas, farming activities must be efficient. They have to produce a surplus so that the rural economy can be diversified by the development of alternative sources of production and employment. Rural industries must be established to process the farmers' crops and provide many of their domestic and agricultural goods. Forestry and animal husbandry must use land not suitable for arable farming; these activities can provide fuel, wood for housing and furniture, animal protein, and also incomes for the rural community. Water control and land conservation measures must be built to increase the productivity of the land at the same time as they provide clean water and possibly power. Schools, dispensaries, sports facilities, and so on, need to be established and supported in the rural areas to improve the lives of all who dwell there. This kind of diversification of the rural economy is an essential part of the struggle for human development and human dignity.[6]

The Presidential Commission on World Hunger makes much the same point in its final report to the President:

The development of irrigation and water resources will make the largest claim on investment funds in the coming years. Most of this investment will be required in Asia, where irregular water supplies constitute the largest technical obstacle to increasing food production in an area where so many of the world's hungry people live. The social and economic impacts of such investments often depend, however, on their scale and likely beneficiaries. In poor rural areas of the developing world, it is not necessarily large expensive dams that are needed, but dirt ditches built by and for small farmers themselves. Because the investment required for water resource development is so massive, the need for long-range planning and well-coordinated international cooperation cannot be overstated.

Additional investment in support services, such as transportation, storage, marketing, credit and processing will be almost equally important. Increases for irrigation, transport and storage now will have immediate as well as future payoffs, since they help stabilize the domestic supply, improve the distribution of essential food grains, and contribute to longer-term increases in supply. Research, training, education and information delivery systems are also crucial needs that will require still further economic investment in the years ahead.[7]

Exercise

1. Do you think that there is a majority of the American people who are willing to make the elimination of hunger a national priority? Explain your answer.
2. If you were the national director for development in a developing country, what would you do to improve the well-being of your people in light of the recommendations made so far? What kind of opposition would you expect and from whom?

3. It has been suggested by some people that genuine land reform is possible only if there is a revolution in the country. What do you think?

Power to the People

Closely connected with the issue of land reform is the issue of political power for the poor people of the rural areas of the world. In a General Accounting Office study entitled, "World Hunger: Implications for U.S. Policies" this point is made: "Because the majority of the rural poor in many developing countries traditionally have not had ownership or control of a significant portion of the agricultural land, they have not had the political power to obtain equitable benefits from their labor and to ensure that government resources were devoted to their enterprises..."[8]. If people are to develop, they must have power. They must be able to control their own activities as well as mount effective pressure to influence national policies. The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development made this point when it affirmed that "participation of the people in the institutions and systems which govern their lives is a basic human right and also essential for realignment of political power in favor of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development." As the "Program of Action" of the Conference suggested, "Rural development strategies can realize their full potential *only* through the motivation, active involvement and organization at the grassroots levels of rural people with special emphasis on the least advantaged strata."[9]

President Nyerere made this same point very strongly:

If the people are to be able to develop they must have power. They must be able to control their own activities within the framework of their village communities. And they must be able to mount effective pressure nationally also. The people must participate not just in the physical labour involved in economic development but also in the planning of it and the determination of priorities. At present the best intentioned governments—my own included—too easily move from a conviction of the need for rural development into acting as if the people had no ideas of their own. This is quite wrong. At every stage of development people do know what their basic needs are. And just as they will produce their own food if they have land, so if they have sufficient freedom they can be relied upon to determine their own priorities of development and then to work for them.

Both political and economic power has to be held by the people within the village, in the region, and in the nation, if development is to be in the people's interest. People are the best creators and defenders of their own human rights—including the right to eat. Freedom is essential to development and not just a product of it. But freedom does not mean, and must not be allowed to mean, the freedom of the Rich and the Clever to exploit the Poor and Ignorant. The individual is part of the conscious human race or he is an animal grubbing for sustenance. It is through co-operation that each of us develops his own potential and receives personal identity. And co-operation has its own requirements and makes its own demands upon us all.[10]

World Food Security

In the book of Exodus, there is a description of a dream by the Egyptian pharoah—he sees seven skinny cows eat seven large cows and he is deeply troubled. The dream is interpreted by the Hebrew, Joseph, to mean that there will be seven years of good harvests and seven years of drought. The Pharoah is delighted to understand and puts Joseph in charge of setting up a storage system for the extra production in the seven good years so that Egypt will have food during the seven drought years. The system works, and Joseph is a hero in the land. While the idea of saving some of the extra we have now for lean times when we may not have enough seems simple and straightforward, it is not an idea which the international community has been able to act on so far. An important recommendation to come out of the World Food Conference in 1974 was the call for the creation of a world food reserve. A food reserve would function like a personal savings account in a bank. A savings account provides you with money for a "rainy day" or when you want to buy something that you need. A world food reserve would do much the same thing. Some food would be "saved" or held on reserve in good years to be used when there were shortages or serious emergencies. The World Food Conference suggested that the reserves would be held by national governments but would be coordinated at the international level. Such a reserve would help to ensure supplies of grain and food at critical moments of famine and food-shortage. The existence of a reserve network would foster a greater amount of food security in the world and free us from the "boom-and-bust" cycles that we are subject to at the present time. The Presidential Commission on World Hunger supported the call for the creation of grain reserves: "A world without hunger will also require built-in protection against the inevitable fluctuations in yearly output caused by natural or man-made events...A key way to prevent the hunger that higher prices will cause among the poor is to establish grain reserves which can be put on the market in periods of scarcity..."

Aid for Self-Reliance

Both the World Food Conference of 1974 and the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development of 1979 affirmed the importance of aid from the developed nations if the developing countries are to undertake the rapid economic growth that will be necessary to overcome hunger and poverty. Outside assistance can provide the difference between hunger and health, between stagnation and development. As mentioned above, the World Food Conference called for the creation of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. In 1980, the Fund was providing $400 million for such purposes. The World Conference of 1979 recommended that "both donor and recipient countries should seek to expand the amount and proportion of resources for agricultural and rural development and in particular consider direct support for programmes of agrarian reform." The conference also urged the nations of the developed world to reach the goal of giving .7% of their Gross National Product for development purposes. The purpose of such aid ought to be to help people to help themselves.

A New Economic Order for the World

Have you ever played Monopoly? If you have, you know that the game follows an inevitable course. At the start, when all the players are even, the game goes along rather uneventfully. Then, mostly by chance, some players begin to amass property and wealth. The other players lose their wealth, as they pay higher and higher rents, and lose their own sources of income (their properties) as they pay off their debts. Eventually, the game is so obviously out of balance that most folks stop playing before anyone goes completely broke. It's obvious who's going to win—they have everything going for them.

The current economic structure of the world is like that, except it's not a game, it can't be stopped as easily as a Monopoly game can be stopped, and lives hang in the balance.

If there is to be genuine development in the poor nations, there must also be changes in the present international economic order. As we found out in the earlier chapters, the developing countries entered the "game" of international trade and investment later than the developed nations and the "rules" of that game are heavily weighted in favor of the rich nations and against the poor nations. The "game" affects what happens at the rural grassroots level in the developing countries. International conferences, like the one in Rome in 1979, have urged changes in the present economic order—changes designed to bring about the equitable participation of the developing countries in world economic activities. Such changes are essential to national efforts to attain rural development.

What kinds of changes are being recommended? One important area is in international trading systems. Changes are needed in these systems to improve access to the markets of industrialized countries for the raw and processed agricultural commodities of developing countries. Such access to these markets needs to be guaranteed to ensure market stability. Other changes in the international system that are being urged involve such things as tariff policies, foreign investments—especially those of the multinational corporations—commodity agreements, economic and technical cooperation.

Exercise

1. Of all the recommendations considered in this chapter, which one do you think is the most important for hungry people? To which could the United States respond with the least amount of difficulty?
2. How would you organize support for these recommendations within your school or community?
3. Write a story describing what a world without hunger would look like.
4. What reasons, if any, are there for us to be hopeful about implementing these solutions?

Footnotes for Chapter 5

[1]President Julius Nyerere, "On Rural Development", World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, July 13, 1979. Hereafter as *Nyerere.*

[2]*Programme of Action,* World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. p. 4.

[3]*Ibid.*

[4]Pope John Paul II, Address to the Participants of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, July 14, 1979.

[5]*Nyerere.*

[6]*Nyerere.*

[7]Presidential Commission on World Hunger, *Overcoming Hunger: The Challenge Ahead.* Page 37.

[8]Bread for the World Background Paper#38.

[9]*Programme of Action,* World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. Page 8.

[10]*Nyerere.*

[11]Presidential Commission on World Hunger, *Overcoming Hunger: The Challenge Ahead.* Page 38.

6. Overcoming Hunger: It's Happening

By this point, you might well be asking if there are any concrete examples of people actually working their way out of hunger and poverty. Were all those ideas for solutions in Chapter Five just nice proposals or is anything really being done? In this chapter, we are going to look at a number of case studies of nations and peoples working to eliminate hunger in their countries.

The Sudan Follows up on the World Food Conference

In his book, NEW HOPE FOR THE HUNGRY?, Larry Minear describes how the Sudan responded to the recommendations that came out of the World Food Conference in 1974:

The Sudan, Africa's largest country and one of the Most Seriously Affected group, also played an active role in the Conference. With only about 9 percent of the country's vast arable land under cultivation, the Sudan has yet to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency. In fact, malnutrition proliferated in 1973-74 under the hot breath of the drought from the Sahel to the West and Ethiopia and Kenya to the East. Looking past its own problems, however, the Sudan is hoping someday to become a breadbasket for its hungry continent.

"It is the declared policy of my government," the minister of agriculture told the Conference, "to involve the rural areas of the country in socio-economic development efforts by eliminating the problems of hunger, thirst, ignorance and disease." In the last four years with help from the governments of Britain, the U.S., Scandinavia, and elsewhere, more than 2.5 million new acres have been irrigated, with studies for an additional 12.5 million acres underway. The Sudan has also welcomed investment by agribusiness concerns and development projects by private groups. Through the Sudan Council of Churches, Christian agencies from all over the world (including Church World Service and Lutheran World Relief) have mounted a multi-million dollar development effort, largely in the Southern Region. The UN family of agencies is also active, particularly the UN Development Program, the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNICEF and (during the period following its civil war) the UN High Commission for Refugees. The World Bank in 1974 approved a $10.7 million agricultural development program which promises improved crops, livestock and nutrition for more than 60,000 farm families. Such a partnership in the interest of agricultural production among governments, bilateral and multilateral aid programs and business and private agency resources, was encouraged by the World Food Conference.[1]

Transforming Barrio Life

The challenge of providing better health programs for the rural poor of the world is tremendous. The following story of the development of community-based health programs show how people are learning to take greater possession of their own lives and destinies.

Community-based health program aims at involving entire barrio in its own growth and development.

Health needs of Antique Province in the Philippines are staggering. For the 300,000 population scattered over an area of 3,000 square kilometers, there is one doctor for every 30,000 people, one government hospital and three small emergency care stations.

Antique is typical of many other provinces. The Philippines has one of the highest tuberculosis infection rates in the world which, along with

respiratory ailments, gastro-enteritis and parasitism, is complicated by widespread malnutrition. Diphtheria, whooping cough, measles and tetanus are common and about half a million people have schistosomiasis (snail fever). Reported rabies deaths are the highest in the world.

The Philippines educates a large number of physicians but 41 percent of them are in the U.S. or other countries, 20 percent are in the Manila area and 13 percent in other cities. The remaining 26 percent are in rural areas where 70 percent of the people live.

Doctors Jesus de la Paz and his wife Trinidad Conchu de la Paz for several years had given twice-weekly free clinic services to families in one of Davao City's largest squatter areas. What if they could share their knowledge and functions with the people, they wondered. They decided to try and early in 1972 the squatter area chose 30 persons, one for every 10 to 12 families, to become trainees in a paramedics program.

When Maryknoll Sister Mary Grenough visited the paramedics in Davao City the following year, she came away with the conviction that these volunteers "are more effective in the delivery of health services than professionals because they understand the conditions in their own communities." "In all my experience as a public health nurse in slum districts of the U.S. and the Philippines, as a nurse instructor and supervisor, I have never known a group of slum dwellers who, of their own free choice, showed such a high acceptance of preventive immunization for children, care for mothers, care of active and potential tuberculosis cases and knowledge of family planning methods."

Sister Mary understood why the paramedics commanded such trust as she made house-to-house visits with Lina, who supports herself, her seriously ill husband and children as a lechonera (one who roasts pigs over an open fire). Lina had completed 6th grade.

"I witnessed her ease and sensitivity in teaching and care as we made the rounds, checking the temperature of a fretful baby, discussing family planning with husband and wife together, reminding a mother that her 4-month-old baby was due for an injection," explains Sister Mary. "When we returned to her single-room shack, her husband had already sterilized the syringe and needle for a tuberculosis patient who comes twice a week. Equipment was spread on a clean towel on the family's only table and Lina gave the injection with the skill of a professional."

Sister Mary had come to believe that the solution to rural health needs resided in the communities themselves. She found the opportunity to promote community-based health programs in 1973 when religious congregations in the Philippines formed the Rural Missionaries. While remaining a Maryknoll Sister, she joined approximately 100 Rural Missionaries from 21 congregations who had committed themselves to serve at least three years in rural areas in a variety of ministries.

Sister Mary has written a manual as a guide for training paramedics and has traveled over much rugged terrain, first on a planning trip, then for the training process and later to follow up on the work of the paramedics. There are now 160 community-based programs in 35 provinces.

Dr. Jimmy Tan, who has worked four years in remote barrios in Leyte, describes his approach, which is typical of community-based programs: "We begin with the most pressing health problems. I solicit the peoples' opinions, for example, on the causes and symptoms of a disease and then build on those that are scientific."

Medicinal plants abound in the Philippines, but their value has been overshadowed by costly drugs produced by foreign firms. Learning herbal remedies for common ailments is an important part of the educational program. In areas where the green leafy malunggay thrives, paramedics explain that the Vitamin C in the shoots is a healing agent. They show how to make an ointment by cooking coconut oil with it.

Sister Mary sees the Rural Missionaries' role as not only eliminating sickness but also involving the entire community in its own overall growth and development. "Local people reach out to transform barrio life," she says, "to solve their health problems by relating them to food production, nutrition, water supply, housing, education, employment, income and its distribution, and ultimately to political decisions.

"When Christ performed miracles of healing this was not just to cure a sick person: His miracles were also signs of the Kingdom, curing both body and spirit. He demanded some response, some action from the person He cured. I think the community-based health programs are in keeping with this reliable precedent." [2]

Exercise

1. In your opinion, what was the most impressive thing about the follow-up program in the Sudan after the World Food Conference?
2. Why is the story, "Transforming Barrio Life" a good example of people learning to help themselves?
3. In terms of long-range development, what is the difference between what Dr. Jesus de la

Paz and his wife were doing in their free clinic and what they started to do in 1972?

4. What makes the efforts of people like Sr. Mary Grenough so important in the struggle against poverty and hunger?

Harvesting the Fog

Access to water is a critical component in any program that seeks to increase agricultural productivity or develop herds of animals. In many places in the world, such access to water is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. This following story from Lutheran World Relief shows how the Gabra people in northeast Kenya are working at renewing their water supplies:

In Hurri Hills in northeast Kenya live the Gabra people. Their thatch-type homes dot the hills and are surrounded by sturdy animal corrals and small gardens. The Gabra raise cattle, sheep, goats, and camel.

A long time ago, according to the lore of the Gabra people, Hurri Hills was covered with forest. Cattle grazed on the lower slopes and meadows, and forest covered the upper slopes. There was plenty of water for animals, plants, and people. It must have been so because the local name for Hurri Hills is *Bathahauri* or "place of the misty forests."

Then, according to Gabra tales, the forests were burned and people planted gardens in place of the trees. The soil was fertile and when they saw what fine crops could be raised, the Gabras cleared more forests and planted more gardens. Then something happened. As forests were cleared and farms increased, the springs and wells dried up. The herds could no longer water on Hurri Hills. Some people took their herds and left this region but others stayed and tried to eke a living out of the thirsty land.

Today the people living in Hurri Hills have little water. There is just one well and it's fed by the giant roots of a wild fig tree. Water is so scarce that the Gabras trek their livestock miles and miles away to drink and bring them back to graze. Their gardens lie bare and brown when there is no rain.

"Please get us water," the Gabra people told Africa Inland Mission. Last year AIM, Africa Inland Church, the Government of Kenya, and Lutheran World Relief pooled their resources and gave money and sent technicians to help the Gabra people find new supplies of water.

Now the Gabras have started to repair old dams and build new ones. In all there will be ten, which will catch the scarce rainwater for piping downhill to water the herds.

The Gabras will also plant 20,000 trees near the catchment basins to hold the soil. The trees will shield the water and keep it from evaporating quickly when strong winds blow across the hills.

The groves of trees will help in another way. Heavy fogs pass over Hurri Hills and when the morning mists blow among the trees, the leaves will harvest the fog. The hairs on the leaves will catch the droplets in the mist and the trees will grow bigger.

It will take many, many years but someday Hurri Hills, the home of the Gabra people may once again become "the place of the misty forests."

Potato Producers' Cooperative in Bolivia

This case study is provided by Oxfam-America, a private, non-profit organization which provides key financial support for self-help development projects in the poorest areas of the developing world. It is a good example of self-help development and the positive role of outside funds in helping that process along.

The floor of the central Bolivian valley of Cochabamba lies one and a half miles above sea level between two parallel spines of the Andes. Its terrain is an irregular succession of stony foothills and gullies. Generations of Andean Indians have grown potatoes and barley along the lower slopes of these hills, imposing upon the Cochabamba valley's broken landscape a pattern of cleared fields, stone walls, and scattered stone houses, all surmounted by the rocky upper slopes and hilltops where small flocks of sheep and llama graze. From any one of these many thousands of cleared fields, the horizon is never more distant than the barren crown of the next hill, a symbol of the combined geographic, technical, economic and political barriers which for centuries have impoverished most of Bolivia's rural population.

One of the most significant of these barriers was removed when Bolivia's 1953 Agrarian Reform redistributed to the nation's tenant-farmers the vast lands previously held by private estates. Yet in the years since, it has become obvious that formidable obstacles continue to deprive the rural population of most of the Agrarian Reform's intended benefits. Throughout the rural sector of the economy, the nation's small-scale producers have been denied access to reasonable terms of credit, while local markets have been dominated and manipulated for personal profit by a class of town-dwelling middlemen. Simultaneously, national economic policy has permitted a five-fold increase in the cost of agricultural inputs such as seed and fertilizer, while prohibiting similar in-

creases in the prices received by the farmers for their crops.

These economic factors have on the one hand driven most of the Cochabamba valley's farmers into exploitative and often ruinous credit arrangements, and on the other hand have severely restricted access to much-needed agricultural inputs. Such harsh economic conditions have combined with population growth to force the valley's farmers to try to produce more while investing less, so that in many areas the overburdened soil is now losing its productive capacity. Finally, factors such as Bolivia's low level of adult literacy (the lowest in continental Latin America) and general isolation imposed by difficult terrain, have prevented individuals and communities in the Cochabamba valley from successfully acting in unison to overcome these obstacles.

In 1975, a 55 member local organization of Cochabamba farmers known as the Potato Producers' Association (PPA) requested the technical assistance of CIPCA (Centro de Investigacion y Promocion del Campesinado), a private, non-profit Bolivian agricultural extension agency. On the basis of their joint analysis of the local economy, CIPCA and the PPA designed and, in 1976, began to implement a rural development program for the area.

CIPCA's responsibilities in the program accurately reflect the three principle needs of the local population. First, CIPCA's organizational activities seek to support the continued growth of the PPA in order to support both local and regional cooperation among the valley's farmers. Second, CIPCA's technical-economic activities seek to increase production and to lower the cost of agricultural inputs (for instance, by beginning a potato seed production program so that seed need no longer be imported). And third, CIPCA's educational work seeks to broaden and clarify the farmers' understanding of the specific factors affecting their livelihood, so that they will be able to consolidate and build further upon the organizational and technical-economic progress made in the context of the CIPCA/PPA program.

Local support and enthusiasm has been demonstrated by the phenomenal increase during the past two years in the number of local producers' associations in Cochabamba; today, there are 68 local associations with a combined membership of 6,500 producers who represent a population of roughly 32,000 people. Although welcome, such rapid organizational growth has far outpaced CIPCA's ability to extend the availability of its educational resources, so that today many of the newer local associations are operating in virtual isolation.

Recently, CIPCA requested the assistance of OXFAM-America in order to prevent such isolation from withering the budding strength of the PPA network. CIPCA is using OXFAM's key financial support to extend the reach of its educational activities, enabling the educational component of the CIPCA/PPA program to develop in unison with growth in the PPA network.

First, CIPCA will be better able to maintain regular, direct contact between its field staff and the local associations, preserving the person-to-person type of contact which has in the past proven to be a vital element in the sustained growth of individual producers' associations. Second, CIPCA staff will be able to reinforce and supplement such direct contact with regular radio broadcasts, providing isolated individuals and communities throughout the Cochabamba valley with timely information on CIPCA/PPA activities, ranging from the value, availability, and proper use of a certain brand of fertilizer to the time and location of upcoming PPA meetings. With these enhanced educational capabilities, CIPCA will be able to help consolidate the recent organizational growth of the PPA network, providing immediate assistance to thousands of small-scale producers, and laying a stable foundation for long-term rural development throughout the Cochabamba valley.

Exercise

1. Why did the springs and wells dry up on Hurri Hills?
2. What was being done to help?
3. What problems did the tenant-farmers of Bolivia face after the land reform of 1953?
4. How is the cooperative project helping to improve the situation?

5. After having read through all of these different case studies, what is your assessment of the prospects of overcoming world hunger? Explain your answer.

Some Other Examples:

Credit in Colombia

Through the formation of credit unions and cooperatives, rural communities have been able to help themselves and ensure that the benefits of increased production go to the farmers—not to loan sharks or middlemen. A very successful cooperative movement in the San Gil region of Colombia became the foundation of a major Catholic Relief Services agricultural development project. Through the cooperative federation, which numbers over 25,000 members, credit is being extended to farmers to diversify crops, increase production and develop community services. This integrated approach, involving credit, leadership training and other services, reaches into many aspects of the social and economic order of San Gil.[5]

Women and Wells in Thailand

Women in Thailand, frustrated by the seasonal lack of water and tired of spending much of their lives in fetching fresh water for their families, brought their concern to Mrs. Ladaval Mojdara, President of the National Christian Women's Department of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

Through their own hard work and support from Church World Service, these women, from ten villages in the northeast corner of Thailand, saw fresh water wells become a reality in February 1979.

Until the wells were dug, land in these Thai villages became flooded during the rainy season, but because of vast areas of sloping terrain water could not be salvaged for the dry season (beginning in February) when the earth dries up and cracks.

With a budget for each well of $250 (U.S.) covering tools and construction materials, the women of the villages cooperated in hand-digging the wells on public sites in each local community. The use of the well is guaranteed to all, and maintenance of the wells is overseen by local leaders within each village.

According to Mrs. Ladaval, "The water from the well not only will help the rural women get their daily use supply, but will also help cultivate their land to produce food for the needs of their communities. When rural women speak out about their concerns to the church, we must find every possible way to assist them. They can now identify their own problems and solutions as well as organize work operations to be carried out by themselves."

In these ten communities in northeastern Thailand, rural women, through their own efforts, have eliminated that daily 12.4 mile walk for the family water. These women are taking charge of their own lives and becoming increasingly self-reliant.[6]

Prayer/Reflection

Read chapter four of the Letter to the Ephesians as a class. Then share with one another examples and experiences from your own life that show this unity and sharing of gifts. Also recall some of the case studies that were offered in this chapter to show how this unity and sharing is occurring in various places in our world.

Footnotes for Chapter 6

[1]Larry Minear, *New Hope for the Hungry?* Friendship Press, 1975. pp 112 & 113.

[2]Maryknoll Magazine, January, 1980, with permission.

[3]Gus and Doris Wiencke, eds., *Children and World Hunger,* Parish Life Press, Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia, 1978. Page 40.

[4]From Oxfam-America promotional brochure, entitled, "Bolivia: CIPCA-Cochabamba Potato Producers' Association."

[5]From Catholic Relief Services pamphlet, "Food Production Programs."

[6]*World Hunger Fact Sheet,* #15, published by Church World Service.

7. Overcoming Hunger: What Can the United States Do?

Elizabeth Pohl

U.S. Policy Towards The Hungry: A Quiz

1. The poverty line for a non-farm family of four was set at $7,160 a year in October of 1979. Roughly ____ U.S. citizens fall below the poverty line. 1. _____

a) 3 million b) 10 million
c) 25 million d) 15 million

2. Through extensive surveys, the U.S. Federal Government has very good data on who is hungry in the United States and where they are located. This makes U.S. domestic feeding programs very effective in meeting the food needs of hungry people. 2. _____

a) true b) false

3. In the United States, people are hungry not because there is a scarcity of food, but because they are too poor to buy it. 3. _____

a) true b) false

4. What item do you think receives the biggest share of the U.S. budget? 4. _____

a) foreign aid b) military spending
c) welfare programs d) educational programs

5. What percentage of the U.S. Gross National Product do you think goes to foreign assistance?

a) about 5% b) about 15% 5. _____
c) under 1% d) more than 40%

6. Among the 17 industrialized nations which form the Development Assistance Committee, the United States ranks _____ in percentage of Gross National Product provided as assistance to developing nations. 6. _____

a) 12th b) 4th c) 1st d) 8th

7. More than 23 billion dollars worth of U.S. food assistance has been provided to the less developed nations. Of this amount, about what percentage has been given to them without charge?

a) 25% b) 75% _____
C) 50% d) 100%

8. The average family in the United States eats about _____ tons of food a year.

a) 4.0 b) 1.6 8. _____
c) 2.5 d) 3.2

9. Recent studies reveal that 20 percent of all foodstuffs U.S. citizens purchase are _____ each year.

a) fed to animals 9. _____
b) lost or wasted
c) donated to local food programs
d) stored for emergencies.

10. __ percent of U.S. agricultural imports come from developing countries. 10. _____

a) 50 b) 25
c) 70 d) 90

Exercise

1. What piece of information in this quiz was most surprising to you? Why?
2. Draw two conclusions about U.S. policy on hunger from the information in the quiz.
3. Give the quiz to three people not in your class. Share the results with one another in small groups.

Eliminating Hunger: Top Priority for The United States

In June of 1978, President Jimmy Carter named a special commission on world hunger. For more than a year, the 20 men and women, leaders in their various professional fields as well as ordinary citizens, met to study the extent of world hunger, its causes, its possible solutions, and the level and kind of involvement demanded of the United

States. The Commission issued its final report, OVERCOMING WORLD HUNGER: THE CHALLENGE AHEAD, in March, 1980. The major recommendation of the Commission is that **the United States government make the elimination of hunger the primary focus of its relationships with the developing world,** beginning with the decade of the 1980's.

Arthur Simon, the Executive Director of Bread for the World, offered a summary and critique of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger's Report. Read his paper, which is found on page 39, and then do the exercise below.

Exercise

1. What was the major recommendation of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger?
2. What other steps did the Commission recommend for the United States to take in helping to eliminate world hunger?
3. What were Simon's major criticisms of the report?
4. Why is the report an important document?

Bread for the World's Recommendations for Implementing the Right to Food

As we shall study later on in this course, Bread for the World is a Christian citizens' movement in the United States that seeks to address the basic causes of hunger by influencing government policy. In 1975, the Board of Directors of Bread for the World adopted a working statement of policy entitled "The Right to Food." This statement of policy gives some suggestions on how the right to food of every person might be affirmed. Your assignment is to read that statement of policy on page 43, and then to do the exercise which appears below.

Exercise

1. What is the reason that the Bread for the World policy statement gives for its members' response to the plight of the hungry?
2. What is the right to food?
3. What is that right grounded in according to the policy statement?
4. What recommendations from the Presidential Commission Report are also in the Bread for the World Policy Statement?
5. What suggestions does the "Right to Food" make that the Commission report does not make?

United States Development Assistance

One of the most popular assumptions among the American people is that the United States is giving billions and billions of dollars away every year to help hungry people and that this aid takes up a huge portion of the federal budget. In fact, total foreign assistance represents only about one and one-half percent of the total federal budget and development assistance alone accounts for less than one percent of that budget. Development assistance is good business for the United States. U.S. development assistance has helped to create foreign markets for U.S. products. Furthermore, the U.S. International Development Corporation Agency estimates that United States development assistance actually creates between 50,000 and 100,000 jobs every year for people in the United States. It is important to keep in mind that roughly 70 percent of the Agency for International Development's expenditures are spent in the United States to purchase American goods and services. International banks like the World Bank and various U.N. programs also spend billions of dollars in the United States every year for everything from agricultural implements to technical training.

Chart I: Levels of Development Assistance Comparative Aid Performance (Official Development Assistance Expenditures as Percent of GNP-1978)

Donor County	Percent of GNP
Sweden	.90
Norway	.90
Netherlands	.82
Denmark	.75
France	.57
Belgium	.55
Australia	.54
Canada	.52
United Kingdom	.48
West Germany	.38
New Zealand	.34
Austria	.29
United States	.27
Japan	.23
Switzerland	.20
Finland	.17
Italy	.07

(Source: DAC Chairman's Report for 1979)

Chart I compares the levels of development assistance expenditures as a percent of Gross National Product in 1978. The United States ranks 12th according to this measurement. That's hardly the image that many of us have of United States aid.

There has been much discussion about development assistance. Arthur Simon of Bread for the World, in a paper called "Let's Overhaul Aid," makes a series of recommendations about U.S. aid programs. After reading this paper, which appears on page 47, answer the questions in the exercise below.

Exercise

1. What should be the focus of our aid program?
2. What are the major problems in development assistance?
3. Should the United States be involved in giving development assistance? Explain.
4. Discuss four suggestions made in the **Recommendations.** Why did you pick the four that you did?
5. Find out your congressional representative's voting record on the most recent piece of developmental assistance legislation.
6. What was the original purpose of P.L. 480?
7. What can be done to improve our foreign food assistance programs?

The Right to Food Resolutions: A Basis for Policy

Recognizing that the policies of the U.S. government vitally affect hungry people, Bread for the World asked Christians all around the country in 1975 to appeal to their congresspersons for a national commitment to the right to food. Bread for the World gave this concern legislative expression in the resolutions that are printed on page 51 .

Introduced by Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., in the Senate and Rep. Donald Fraser, D-Minn., in the House, these resolutions affirm for all human beings a right that many of us already enjoy — the right to food. The resolutions were initially ignored by most members of Congress, but the broad public support that Bread for the World mobilized quickly gave the resolutions high visibility.

Through the grace of God, a nationwide offering of 240,000 letters, citizen efforts in many congressional districts, and much hard work in Congress itself, a Right-to-Food resolution passed each house in September, 1976. The resolutions are the most far-reaching declaration of intent on hunger ever made by Congress, and they lay the groundwork for public policy change. For example, building on those resolutions, in 1977 Bread for the World played a key role in drafting legislation and obtaining congressional support for a U.S. grain reserve program, an essential first step toward world food security.

The Right-to-Food resolutions are an important signal of concern about hunger. While they do not appropriate any funds, the resolutions form the basis for future legislation. They commit the Congress to work for the elimination of hunger and provide a rallying point for all who struggle to end hunger. They affirm "the right of every person in this country and throughout the world to food and a nutritionally adequate diet" and say that "the need to combat hunger shall be a fundamental point of reference in the formulation and implementation of United States policy in all areas which bear on hunger including international trade, monetary arrangements, and foreign assistance." The resolutions emphasize that programs encouraging self-reliance, rather than programs based strictly on food aid should be used to reduce hunger.

Prayer/Reflection

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew Jesus puts before the people the last judgement. He is offering each of us a choice between caring and sharing with one another and being selfish. As we read this passage let us pray for the grace to respond to those who are in need.

Matthew 25:31-46

Background Paper #46
June 1980

by Arthur Simon
Executive Director
Bread for the World

A LOOK AT THE REPORT

of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger

The Presidential Commission on World Hunger's report is an important document for two reasons. First, it deals with a matter of global urgency. Second, as the product of a presidential commission, it has public standing.

In assessing world hunger and recommending various government actions, the report lays down a serious challenge to the nation and its leadership. The question is whether the President, the Congress and the public will accept that challenge or relegate its findings to the archives.

The report is a compromise document. This is at once its strength and its weakness.

The report is a compromise because it was produced by 20 commission members with many conflicting views. Not surprisingly, their product is uneven. On the one hand, the report is a valuable introduction to hunger with fundamentally sound insights and fine recommendations. On the other hand, the report has gaps and contradictions, and its basic principles are not consistently integrated in the various chapters. Metaphorically, the report lays a solid foundation, but erects a superstructure built by craftsmen who on occasion seem guided by different architects.

A flawless document, however, should not be seen as the goal of the commission and the standard against which to measure its work. In the words of one commission member, "A perfect report wouldn't have a ghost of a chance of being implemented." Even as it stands, the odds against its implementation seem formidable, for despite important shortcomings, the report is clearly far ahead of the public and the nations' leadership. In any case, the report is there for the public to debate, if it will, and for the President and the Congress to take action on, if they can be so persuaded.

Major Recommendation

The major recommendation of the Presidential Commission is *that the United States Government make the elimination of hunger the primary focus of its relationships with the developing countries,* beginning with the decade of the 1980's. This recommendation serves as the hub of the report, the central point to which the report's analysis and other recommendations lead.

General Analysis Of World Hunger

The report's basic analysis of the problem of world hunger and the role of the United States in response to it can be summarized in the following five points:

1. The United States should be involved in hunger alleviation for several reasons. *Human life is sacred and, therefore, we have a moral responsibility as citizens and as a nation to respond to world hunger.* In this connection the report stresses the right to food, which it calls the most basic of all human rights or needs. The commission says that "the United States has a special capability and hence a special responsibility to lead the campaign against world hunger." Thus, at the very outset, the commission comes about as close as a secular panel can to casting its message in the language of faith. The panel cannot appropriately affirm that "the earth is the Lord's" and that we are stewards, responsible for the way we use the earth's resources to enhance or diminish life. Missing, inescapably, is the note of joy that Christians properly express, understanding our response to world hunger less as an obligation than as an opportunity to celebrate the Kingdom. Nevertheless, coming from a presidential commission, the report begins on the right note.

In addition to moral obligation, the report puts forward two other reasons for a positive U.S. response to world hunger. One is *national security.* The commission points out that most of us equate national security with the strength of strategic military forces. It calls this prevailing belief "a simplistic illusion" and argues that a major worldwide effort to conquer hunger and poverty may be crucial both for global and national security.

A third reason for a U.S. response, the commission contends, is *economic self-interest.* The report cites U.S. dependence upon developing contries for both exports and imports, and the extent to which their economic development affects our own. Further, the commission says, if developing countries do not substantially increase their per capita food production, "both they and the United States will pay the price in rising food costs and uncertain supplies." It adds that "recurrent disruptions in global food supply . . . would cause further havoc within the international economy."

2. *"The major world hunger problem today is not famine or starvation, but the less dramatic one of chronic undernutrition."* The report notes that estimates of those eating less than minimum energy (calorie) requirements range from 450 million to more than one billion persons, and this does not factor in those with protein, vitamin and mineral deficiencies. It notes that the media, and hence the public, tend to focus on severe famines and ignore the more pervasive, underlying problem of chronic malnutrition.

3. *"Poverty is the root cause of hunger today."* "Most of the world's malnourished people have neither the land to grow their own food nor the money to buy it," according to the report. Although it notes that instability of food supplies (food insecurity) is another important cause of hunger, the report lays primary emphasis on the fact that people are hungry because they are poor. At the same time, it views hunger as "the central strand in the web of underdevelopment," and consequently the commission argues that hunger is the appropriate focal point around which to marshall efforts to eliminate poverty.

Among the conditions of poverty the report includes poor health, illiteracy, unemployment, crowded housing, contaminated drinking water, and large families, all of which "perpetuate and worsen the effects of malnutrition." "Excessive population growth, like hunger itself, is both a symptom and a result of poverty and powerlessness," the report notes, adding that the key to reducing family size is to improve social and economic conditions that underlie rapid population growth rates among the very poor.

4. *Unjust economic arrangements both within countries and internationally, lie behind hunger and poverty.* The report gives primary weight to the inequitable distribution of resources and income within developing countries. It notes that traditional economic strategies, preoccupied as they were with trying to achieve rapid economic growth, assumed that the benefits would "trickle down" to the very poor. In fact this approach to economic development has tended to increase the concentration of wealth and widen the gap between rich and poor. The report singles out the need for land reform in areas such as Latin America, where one-tenth of the farmers own 90 percent of the farmland and more than 60 percent of the rural poor are landless. But it also notes that in some densely populated countries, for example Bangladesh, the land is already too fragmented into tiny parcels. There, more labor intensive industries in rural areas are needed to provide off-farm employment. Discrimination against women in rural development and backward technologies are also among the factors cited for extreme poverty and hunger.

Although stressing actions that poor countries themselves must take to achieve equitable growth and nutritional security, the report says that "the success of their efforts will be strongly conditioned by an international economic order which they did not create, but which affects them in important ways." This international order is shaped primarily by the large industrialized nations, who, the report maintains, should now respond to developing world appeals for a "new international economic order."

5. *Lasting solutions to world hunger require rapid, equitable, self-reliant and environmentally sound economic growth, with emphasis on a strong agricultural base and the maximum employment of labor.* Without skimming over the importance of "treating the symptoms" of hunger—that is, responding to immediate needs through food assistance—the report stresses long-term solutions. It advocates an integrated approach to development that is aimed at meeting "basic human needs." It lays special stress on each part of the italicized sentence above (which is my composite, not a quotation from the report). Each deserves more comment than space permits in this critique, because in combination they indicate a sound understanding of the type of economic development that offers promise as a solution to hunger.

One could take issue with one or another emphasis in the first part of the report, such as the limited attention

it gives to population growth or to the role of women in agriculture. But it is flawed primarily by its failure to deal with the role of the poor themselves—their initiative and participation in the development process. The report quotes favorably a recommendation of the 1979 U.N. Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, which called for "redistribution of economic and political power, and people's participation." The commission alludes to this theme several times, but never develops it anywhere in this report. Skimming over the need for poor people to make decisions regarding their own economic development gives the report a somewhat top-down orientation.

Despite that weakness, however, the general analysis is impressive. It is, arguably, the most lucid and readable portion of the document.

Specific Issues and Recommendations

When the commission moves into specific areas that call for a U.S. policy response, however, it has difficulty intergrating some of its earlier insights into these chapters of the report. The need of the commission to accomodate competing views—some of which are placed in footnotes and in a lengthy appendix as dissenting opinions—evidently accounts for this difficulty.

Transnational Corporations

The report's treatment of U.S. companies in developing countries illustrates the problem. Basic themes such as self-reliant development, equitable growth, and the need for economic reforms suddenly fade and the role of the companies in relation to these is not adequately treated. Instead, we see a delicate wavering between encouragement and caution regarding their role. The extent to which distorted development has been spurred by transnational corporations is glossed over much too diplomatically. Little is said about U.S. company ownership and control of land abroad or about company involvement in export cropping, and nothing at all about several common abuses. The report acknowledges that the poorest of poor countries and people have little to offer the companies in the way of a profitable market, but this illuminating fact is not further explored.

Few deny that there can be a positive role for U.S.-based companies in developing countries. Even China and Vietnam think so, and most recently Zimbabwe. Here, however, the call for U.S. company involvement does not accompany a sufficiently clear understanding of the *type* of involvement that is needed.

Some problems are reported, however, and the commission appropriately calls for support of U.N. efforts to establish standards for investment on the part of transnational corporations. Representatives of the major U.S. grain companies declined to testify before the commission. The commission nevertheless notes that more than 85 percent of internationally traded grain is marketed by five grain companies, and it calls, in a soft and indirect way, for more public disclosure of information related to grain trading.

In attempting to reflect a consensus that does not exist, this chapter is analytically the weakest part of the report. Even so, it has instructive features and poses many of the right questions. In the end only four relatively mild recommendations are made regarding the role of U.S. companies n developing countries.

Trade

The report notes that trade "is the single most important determinant of a country's economic activity that can be influenced by outside forces." Its chapter on "trade and debt" includes a well-reasoned argument for the lowering of trade barriers so that low-income countries can provide more employment in labor-intensive industries. Such a development would also benefit the world economy as a whole, including our own. It would, for example, mean lower prices for U.S. consumers and more jobs in export-oriented industries here. The report acknowledges, however, that the lowering of trade barriers can also cost many U.S. workers their jobs and some U.S. industries their future—unless assistance is given, for example, to prepare workers for other jobs or industries for other types of production. Therefore the commission favors "adjustment assistance" for adversely affected workers and industries. It also favors a U.S. economic development policy with full employment and balanced growth as major goals. Without some national economic planning, the report says, domestic opposition is certain to limit severely the extent to which this country can lower its trade barriers and thereby enable many hungry people abroad to find useful employment.

The chapter on trade does not weigh the emphasis that a country should give to production (of food, for example) for local consumption compared to production for generating export earnings. Such a discussion could have illustrated the opportunities and difficulties of applying a policy of self-reliant, equitable growth.

Food Security

Regarding world food security, the commission notes that the U.S. farmer-held grain reserve is working well and "has proven popular with grain farmers." The commission recommends that it be substantially expanded, that an emergency government-owned wheat reserve also be established, and that the United States continue to press for an agreement with other nations on an international reserve system. All have been major BFW concerns.

Missing from this section is comment on rapid moves toward increasing the use of cropland for energy rather than for food production. The turn toward "gasohol", including government subsidies to encourage it, poses a new threat to world food security by making future supplies more precarious and inviting food prices to soar beyond the reach of additional millions. It will intensify the competition for food between poor people and prosperous people.

Aid

The report does not focus primarily on aid and points out that "development assistance represents only a fraction

of all North-South economic interactions." Nevertheless the largest chapter and the one with more recommendations than any other, is on aid. The first of these asks that the director of the new International Development Cooperation Agency (IDCA) be accorded cabinet-level status, so that economic development abroad (not just aid) can be better integrated into U.S. foreign policy and planning. The Commission also recommends that U.S. development aid move rapidly toward the U.N. goal of 0.7 percent of the nation's GNP, roughly triple the current U.S. percentage.

The report is critical of aid on several counts—for example, the extent to which it is used for political and military purposes—and most of its recommendations aim at a more effective use of aid. The commission says that U.S. aid should "be targeted selectively at poor nations strongly committed to meeting basic human needs and rights." It urges that U.S. aid support land reform. And it recommends "a complete revision of the P.L. 480 Food for Peace program" so that it serves clear developmental and humanitarian purposes. Several commission members complained that after identifying economic structures as a basic cause of hunger, this chapter moved away from that analysis and dealt with technical, bureaucratic and welfare remedies. This is not a completely fair observation, because several of the recommendations (e.g., aiding countries strongly committed to meeting basic human needs and rights, and pushing land reform) if seriously implemented, would enable U.S. aid to have a significant impact on economic arrangements. The chapter, however, could have dealt more directly with the relationship of aid to economic reform.

Domestic Hunger

The commission recommends a nationwide nutritional surveillance system in the United States (one of Bread for the World's major current objectives), increased funding for those domestic feeding programs that have proven effective, and adoption of "a national policy of economic development designed to foster balanced growth and full employment." Although the discussion surrounding it was much too brief, the last of these recommendations speaks to the need for economic planning—and for planning economic growth in ways that will enable unemployed persons to work. The recommendation establishes an important link with the chapter on trade, which made the same point, and connects the trade issue with domestic hunger, U.S. employment and the health of the U.S. economy. In general, the report does not discuss the links between the causes of hunger in this country and the causes of hunger abroad. Fortunately, this critical link is mentioned. After all, if the commission is advising national food plans and national development plans for other countries, why not for our country, as well? And if economic reforms are a crucial part of the solution there, why not here?

Public Education

In a last minute action, the commission added a final recommendation: "that the Congress provide funds to establish an organization to educate and inform the American public about world hunger." The Western European countries that contribute the highest proportion of aid (far higher than the U.S. proportion) are countries that also allocate funds for public education on the issue. There appears to be a direct relationship between the two. A similar effort in the United States makes sense, the commission believes. This recommendation may be among the most important in the report.

Conclusion

In short, the commission's report is uneven and flawed, but presents, on balance, a useful analysis and some excellent recommendations. Those who expected the commission to come up with the best book ever on hunger will be disappointed. It is not that. Those who want to find fault with the report, therefore, will have plenty of fault to find. But we do well to caution idealists who tend to make "the good" the enemy of "the best."

The report must be judged primarily on the basis of its *utility*. From that standpoint, it provides us with an opportunity to get the tragedy of world hunger more widely discussed and better understood. More important, it gives us a chance, one that should be especially cherished by Christians, to build support for those recommendations that deserve support.

The fatal problem with most commission reports is not their failure to analyze a problem sufficiently well, but the lack of political will to carry out even the most elementary proposals that have been made. That, not the prospect that its analytical weakness will go unnoticed, is clearly the overarching danger faced by this report. If even the commission's major recommendation—that the United States make the elimination of hunger the primary focus of its relationships with the developing countries—were adopted, we would be light years ahead.

The report is addressed, first of all, to an audience of one: President Carter. But the report is also a public document, there for each of us to use. So the challenge is ours, as well. Will we use it—and other means—to develop the public interest and the political will to get the country moving against hunger? If not we, then who?

What You Can Do

1. Write President Jimmy Carter urging implementation of the commission's report.

2. Invite your member of Congress to speak on the report or meet with him/her to discuss the report. Ask (in person or by letter) what s/he is willing to do to implement specific recommendations, including the major recommendation "that the United States Government make the elimination of hunger the primary focus of its relationships with the developing countries."

Bread for the World will press for implementation of key aspects of the report as part of our future agenda.

August 1975
Background Paper #4

the right to food

A Working Statement of Policy by Bread for the World

Our response to the hunger crisis springs from God's love for all people. By creating us and redeeming us through Jesus Christ, he has given us a love that will not turn aside from those who lack daily bread. The human wholeness of all of us--the well-fed as well as the starving--is at stake.

As Christians we affirm the right to food: the right of every man, woman, and child on earth to a nutritionally adequate diet. This right is grounded in the value God places on human life and in the belief that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Because other considerations, including the importance of work, flow from these, we cannot rest until the fruit of God's earth is shared in a way that befits his human family.

Today hundreds of millions suffer from acute hunger. Emergency food aid is imperative. For this reason Bread for the World supports the work of church and other agencies in alleviating hunger, and urges increased support for them. However, the problem is far too massive for private agencies alone. The resources that governments command must also be used if food is to reach people in most areas of famine and end starvation.

But emergency aid is not enough. We need to think in terms of long-range strategies that deal with the causes of hunger. These causes include poverty, illiteracy, lack of health services, technical inadequacy, rapid growth of population, and unemployment, to name some of the more serious. Church relief agencies have increasingly sponsored development projects that address these problems. But again, although there are small models of excellence on the part of those agencies, the extent of hunger makes large-scale government assistance essential.

Hunger is also rooted in privileges that may, in securing wealth for some, perpetuate the poverty of others. Because they reflect sinful human nature and are usually sanctioned by custom and law, these privileges are often the most obstinate causes of hunger. The rich can resist taxes that could generate jobs for the poor. Landless peasants may be forced to work for a few pennies an hour. Tenant farmers are often kept in perpetual debt. The powerful, with privileges to protect, can use repression to prevent change.

The problem of privileges for some at the cost of hunger for others applies not only to persons and groups within a country, but also to nations. Because the United States earns more than twice the income of the entire poor world, U.S. Christians need to be especially alert to the possibility that our privileges may come at high cost to others.

The policies of the U.S. government are especially crucial regarding world hunger. Our nation can lead countless persons out of hunger or lock them into despair and death. Citizen impact on U.S. policies is, therefore, our most important tool in the struggle against hunger.

In affirming the right to food, Bread for the World seeks:

1. An end to hunger in the United States. It supports:
   A. a floor of economic decency under every U.S. citizen through measures such as a minimum income and guaranteed employment;
   B. steps to improve existing programs, such as (1) food stamps; (2) school lunches; and (3) nutritional assistance for especially vulnerable persons, along with steps to enroll in these programs all who qualify; and
   C. a national nutrition policy that enables every citizen to get an acceptably nutritious diet.

2. A U.S. food policy committed to world food security and rural development, as proposed by the World Food Conference.

The United States clearly shoulders a special responsibility regarding global food needs. Our country controls most of the world's grain exports. U.S. commercial farm export earnings from poor countries alone jumped from $1.6 billion in 1972 to $6.6 billion in 1974--an increase double the amount of our entire development assistance to those countries. While this happened, U.S. food assistance declined sharply. We now need to respond in a way that reflects the more generous U.S. tradition of two decades following World War II.

The World Food Conference charted the necessary path to world food security under a World Food Council that would coordinate both emergency relief efforts and long-range rural development. Bread for the World supports:

A. U.S. participation in a world food reserve program, with reserves under national control;

B. an increase in U.S. food assistance, especially the grant portion, to at least the level of a tithe (ten percent) of this country's food exports, as our share toward the establishment of a grain reserve with an initial world target of 10 million tons;

C. a substantial increase in the amount of food made available to the UN World Food Program and to voluntary agencies for distribution abroad;

D. humanitarian, not political, use of food assistance, with assistance channeled through, or in cooperation with, international agencies;

E. a fair return to the U.S. farmer for his production, with curbs against windfall profits and special measures to assist family farmers; just wages for farm workers; and

F. full U.S. participation in the International Fund for Agricultural Development, along with other steps that would promote rural development in the poor countries. Such development would, among other things, enable them to produce or secure adequate supplies of fertilizer and energy, and accelerate research relating to food production there.

3. The reform and expansion of U.S. development assistance.

The United States currently ranks near the bottom of Development Assistance Committee nations, when assistance is measured as a percentage of GNP. By official (and somewhat exaggerated) figures, U.S. development assistance to poor countries amounts to one-fifth of 1 percent of our GNP. We can do better than that. What is true for the United States is true for all countries: "To whom much has been given, much will be required." Further, the quality of assistance is crucial. Assistance should deliver self-help opportunities primarily to those living in hunger and poverty, especially the rural poor. It should be aimed at developing self-reliance, not dependency on the part of the recipient nations and people. And rather than imposing capital-intensive western technologies on those countries, assistance should make possible the development of locally appropriate technologies, usually geared to small-scale, labor-intensive methods. Bread for the World therefore supports:

A. a U.S. contribution, in proportion to our share of the world's income, to the International Fund for Agricultural Development as a major attempt to increase the food production capacity and living standards of impoverished rural families;

B. rapid movement toward the 1-percent-of-GNP assistance goal;

C. the "untying" of assistance. Economic strings that put burdens on recipient nations should be cut;

D. honest accounting of U.S. assistance. Loans are counted as grants in aid figures. Either repayments from previous loans should be subtracted, or only a percentage of loans counted, because they are made on below-market terms;

E. channeling of development assistance through international and transnational agencies, where possible, without precluding the expansion of bilateral assistance; and

F. adoption, with other donor and recipient nations, of an international-

ly agreed set of standards on the basis of which the amount of development assistance would be determined. These standards should include: (a) need; (b) evidence that development is occurring among the masses of poor people; (c) willingness of leaders to institute basic reforms, such as land reform, tax reform, and anti-corruption measures, in order to reduce the disparity between rich and poor within a country; (d) de-emphasis on military spending; and (e) efforts to secure human rights.

4. The separation of development assistance from all forms of military assistance.

Most U.S. aid is either military assistance or assistance in which political and military considerations are uppermost. This mixing of humanitarian assistance with military and political aid gives the public an exaggerated impression of real U.S. aid to hungry and poverty-ridden countries. Bread for the World therefore proposes legislation to sever completely the connection between humanitarian development assistance and military and political assistance.

5. Trade preferences for the poorest countries.

Trade is not perceived by the public as a "hunger" issue, but trade, even more than aid, vitally affects hungry people. In the past poor countries have been compelled to export their raw materials at bargain prices, and import high-priced manufactured products. The terms of such trade have progressively deteriorated over the past two decades. Recent food, fertilizer, and oil price hikes have left the 40 poorest countries, representing a billion people, in a desperate position. For them in particular trade opportunities are more important than ever. Bread for the World therefore supports the following positions, which are partly embodied in the Trade Act of 1974:

A. the lowering of trade barriers such as tariffs and quotas, especially on semi-processed and finished products. It has been estimated that these barriers cost U.S. consumers $10 to $15 billion a year;

B. special trade preferences for the poorest countries. These countries need markets for their products, if they are to work their way out of hunger; and

C. greatly increased planning for economic adjustment, including assistance for adversely affected U.S. workers and industries. Without this, U.S. laborers are made to bear an unfair burden and are increasingly pitted against hungry people.

6. Reduced military spending.

U.S. defense spending alone exceeds the total annual income of the poorest billion people on earth, the truly hungry children of God. Our thinking begins with them. During his presidential years, Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed." Bread for the World supports:

A. greater U.S. initiative in pressing for arms limitation agreements and mutual cutbacks in existing arms as well as greater public access to information surrounding negotiations;

B. curtailment of the sale of arms, if possible by international agreement; and

C. adoption of a U.S. defense budget that would reduce military spending. For example, a 10 percent reduction could provide $9 billion for financing long-range measures against hunger.

7. Study and appropriate control of multinational corporations, with particular attention to agribusiness.

Multinationals are playing an increasingly influential global role. They transcend national boundaries and often bring jobs and needed development opportunities to poor countries. But they create empires that are not accountable to host

countries and often impose a type of development that reinforces inequalities and, consequently, the problem of hunger, as well. Bread for the World therefore supports:

A. the principle that each country has the right to determine its own path to human and social development, including legitimate control over outside investments

B. efforts to study and analyze the role of multinational corporations, especially as they relate positively or negatively to the problem of hunger;

C. national and international measures that seek fair means of accountability on the part of such companies; and

D. special examination of the role of corporate farming, with a view toward adequate safeguards for low-income consumers and small family farm holders.

8. Efforts to deal with the population growth rate.

Rapid population growth is putting great pressure on the world's food supply and on the capacity of countries to absorb the increase into their economies. Population growth will not be effectively curbed if it is dealt with in isolation, but only if placed in the context of total development needs. For example, hungry people usually have large families, in part because surviving sons provide security in old age. Only where social and economic gains include the poor, and where the rate of infant mortality begins to approximate that of the affluent nations, do people feel secure enough to limit family size. Bread for the World therefore supports:

A. greatly expanded U.S. efforts to enable the poor of the world to work their way out of hunger and poverty;

B. additional U.S. assistance for health programs abroad aimed at reducing infant mortality and increasing health security;

C. additional support for research to develop family planning methods that are dependable, inexpensive, simple, safe, and morally acceptable to all; and

D. efforts to modify our own consumption, which strains the carrying capacity of the earth no less than population increases.

9. Christian patterns of living.

The growing scarcity of several key resources--grain, fuel, and fertilizer in particular--that directly affect the food supply has prompted many to reassess their habits of consumption. This country, with 6 percent of the world's population, consumes one-third or more of the world's marketed resources. On the average each person in the United States buys about 4.5 times more grain--most of it indirectly as meat and dairy products, along with alcohol and pet food--than persons in poor countries do. There is often no direct connection between our using less and others having more. Nevertheless there are important psychological, symbolic, and spiritual values in reexamining our patterns of consumption. Bread for the World invites Christians to:

A. remember that along with changes in habits of consumption we have to change government policies, without which life-style modifications do little more than give us a misleading sense of accomplishment;

B. reconsider our personal spending and consuming, with a view toward living more simply and less materialistically;

C. reconsider a way of life in which billions of dollars are spent annually to make us crave, and in turn spend countless additional billions on products we do not need, and which in fact often harm us--all this while sisters and brothers perish for lack of bread.

These things we seek because we affirm for others a right that we enjoy: the right to food. We seek to extend to all this God-given right in obedience to Christ who has called us to follow him in loving our neighbor as ourselves.

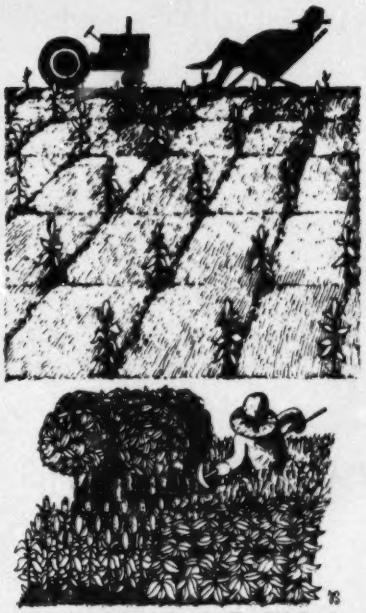
LET'S OVERHAUL Development and Food AID

by Arthur Simon
Executive Director, Bread for the World

The U.S. foreign aid program, deeply mired in confusion of purpose and administration, should be re-organized. The program needs to focus more sharply on self-help opportunities for those trapped in hunger and poverty. A rewriting of assistance programs along the lines suggested below would not only be in keeping with the nation's tradition of responding generously to human suffering, but various opinion polls suggest that it would also receive broad public support.

In Perspective

It is necessary, first of all, to put the question of aid into perspective. The basic public response to hunger tends to be aid: food aid and development aid. However, this exaggerates the role of aid and ignores other policy changes that could do more to alleviate hunger. For example, compared to reforms in trade, aid has been called "the soft option"--an easy way out. The dollars involved in international trade and investment far surpass the amount of money allocated for aid, and they affect development priorities of poor countries more directly. Nevertheless in 1977 official development aid from donor nations totaled more than $17 billion. That sum is sizable enough to be of special importance to the poorest countries. The challenge is to ensure that our aid supports the right kind of development in those countries--and that our other economic policies do the same.



Reprinted from Ceres, The FAO Review on Agriculture and Development

Development Aid Problems

The following shortcomings of U.S. development aid explain why it needs to be revamped:

1. Confusion of purpose. U.S. assistance springs from a strong humanitarian impulse--surely the main reason for the program's accomplishments. However, almost from the beginning decisions regarding assistance have been influenced by overriding political and security interests. The Marshall Plan was proposed, in part, to save Western Europe from communism. Then only 20 days after Congress enacted Truman's Point Four Program of technical assistance to poor countries, the Korean War broke out, and our aid became heavily skewed to areas where security--rather than need--was the primary consideration. For almost two decades Taiwan got as much in U.S. economic grants as India did, although India has more than 35 times the population and is far more impoverished. Even today more than 40% of U.S. aid goes for security oriented assistance, most of it to the Middle East.

Assistance has also served U.S. commercial interests. Requests to Congress for bilateral aid consistently cite the large portion (currently about 70%) of U.S. aid money spent in the United States. The message is clear: Development aid helps U.S. business and provides jobs. But the tying of assistance to purchases in this country often impedes the kind of development that aid should foster.

2. Misconceived goals. Aid has not consistently addressed the underlying causes of hunger and poverty. Thus land reform, which could enable impoverished farmers to own land and become more productive, has seldom been pushed. Land reform, along with other social reforms, was built into the Alliance for Progress with Latin America, but it was quietly ignored when opposition from wealthy landowners surfaced and when fear of Castro-like revolutions subsided.

Instead aid has primarily tried to spur economic growth, which was supposed to insure a trickling down of benefits to the

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poor. Unfortunately, experience has shown that not very much trickled down; and in some cases, such as Brazil, the poor are relatively worse off than before, despite--in the case of Brazil--more than a decade of unprecedented economic growth.

Along with the trickle-down strategy has gone a tendency to export western technology without realizing that it does not always serve the needs of the local population.

An anti-rural bias has also prevailed. Although about 75% of the population in poor countries is rural, most assistance has gone for urban projects. Little of it has upgraded living conditions or provided opportunities for the rural poor--a neglect that has held food production down and at the same time spurred a growing exodus to the cities, where too few jobs await new arrivals.

Above all, assistance has not been conceived as part of a larger strategy that requires

CHART 1
Official Development Assistance
(as percentage of GNP)
Other DAC Countries*
United States
1965
1970
1975
*Development Assistance Committee countries listed on Chart #2. Adapted from Agenda 1977 and used by permission of the Overseas Development Council.

reforms in areas such as trade and investment. Consequently, well-conceived aid programs have often worked at cross purposes with other U.S. policies, which are seldom considered in terms of their impact on hunger.

3. Inadequate monitoring. Assistance is not adequately planned or monitored for its impact upon the very poor. As a result, projects such as large-scale production of crops for export sale are supported without sufficient understanding of their consequences.

4. Splintered administration. Responsibility for aid has been divided among the Agency for International Development, the State Department, the Treasury Department and ACTION. A splintering also occurs in Congress, where a variety of committees and subcommittees deal with different aspects of U.S. assistance.

5. Declining contributions. During the peak year of the Marshall Plan, U.S. development aid amounted to 2.79% of the nation's total production. Now it is less than one-tenth of that. Even since 1965 our share has sharply declined, while that of other donor nations has increased (chart #1). Our ranking of 12th among 17 donor nations (chart #2) would drop and our share would be reduced to about 0.15% of GNP if security supporting assistance were not included in the U.S. totals. In addition, the share of U.S. aid that goes in the form of loans (41% in 1976) rather than grants is higher than it is for most other donor nations. The Western European average was 20% in loans and 80% in grants for 1976. And if we subtract for inflation, our aid in real dollars has also declined since the mid-1960s (chart #3).

Since 1973 Congress has focused the purpose and goals of aid more clearly toward the poor through a "New Directions" mandate. These efforts have helped considerably, but still fall far short of the complete revision that is needed.

CHART 2

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
(as a percentage of GNP) 1976

Sweden	0.82%
Netherlands	0.82
Norway	0.71
France	0.62
Denmark	0.56
Belgium	0.51
Canada	0.46
New Zealand	0.43
Australia	0.42
United Kingdom	0.38
Germany	0.31
UNITED STATES	0.25
Japan	0.20
Switzerland	0.19
Finland	0.18
Italy	0.13
Austria	0.10

Source: OECD

Recommendations

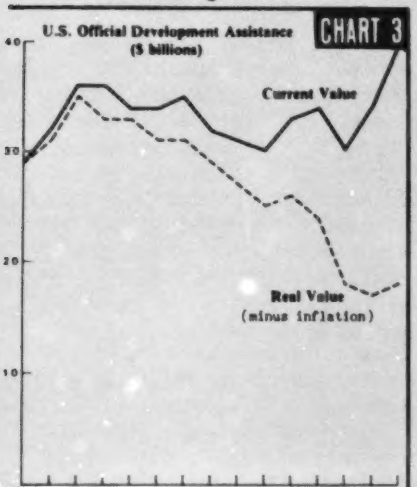
1. Re-organize the program. Development and food assistance should be administered--as it is in most other donor countries--by a single agency with clear responsibility for representing development needs in the formulation of all U.S. international economic policy. It should be independent of the State Department. Its administrator should report directly to the President. Re-organization along these lines would not only give U.S. assistance more coherence, but would elevate the consideration of hunger and poverty when, for example, trade policies are fashioned. It would also provide for a strong advocate in the Administration for the world's poor.

2. Clarify its objectives. The program should be sharply focused toward self-help opportunities for those, especially the rural poor, living in hunger and poverty. It should ensure their full participation in the development process, as well as in development gains such as higher incomes and food production increases. Adequate nutrition and satisfaction of

other basic human needs should be made primary targets. These objectives should also be pursued with regard to U.S. aid that is channeled through multilateral institutions such as the International Development Association and various U.N. agencies.

3. Separate development and food aid from military and security supporting assistance. These categories should be considered on their own merits. Compelling Congress to vote for or against them all as a single package confuses distinctly different issues. It confuses the public, too.

4. Establish criteria for receiving aid. These should be international standards acceptable to both donor and recipient countries as the basis for determining the amount of aid. Criteria should include: (a) need; (b) evidence that aid is spurring development primarily among the very poor; (c) willingness to institute basic reforms, such as land reform, tax reform and anti-corruption measures, that will help reduce the disparity between rich and poor in a receiving country; (d) de-emphasis on military spending; and (e) efforts to secure human rights.



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5. Require hunger impact projections and adequate monitoring of assistance. Ways can be found to do this without adding paperwork and delay. The purpose of evaluations should be to help in the design and implementation of future efforts. We have much to learn. For example, under what circumstances would a project involving agricultural production for export have an adverse or beneficial effect on the nutritional levels of people in a country or local area? Evaluation by both outsiders and insiders, as well as by local, developing country persons, makes sense.

6. Offer debt forgiveness to the poorest countries. Repayments to the U.S. government from the poorest nations of previous development assistance loans should be cancelled, provided that the amount forgiven is used by the recipient country for programs or projects that fulfill sound development aid objectives.

7. Increase the proportion of grants. More aid should go in the form of grants. Most loans should have a grant-back provision that permits cancellation of repayments if assistance loans have been used to fulfill sound development aid objectives.

8. Do not require purchases in the United States. Compelling recipients to spend aid dollars in this country diminishes the value of assistance and may even distort its purpose. The United States should not insist on immediate market advantages, but take the long view. Countries that develop well will also become better markets for U.S. products.

9. More accurate reporting of assistance. Loans and grants are now lumped together in reports on U.S. aid. This method exaggerates the value of our assistance and misleads the public. On the other hand repayment cancellations should be reported as aid, even though new appropriations are not involved.

10. Increase the level of assistance. Within several years U.S. assistance should at least return to the level that it had in the early '60s (0.5% of GNP). This modest goal would double our assistance.

11. Expand the role of private non-profit development agencies. In terms of private voluntary contributions (measured as a percentage of GNP) the United States ranks third among aid-giving nations (chart #4)--an indication that public interest is running far ahead of government response on the question of aid. In line with the vitality of the private sector and the experience of other donor nations, more assistance should be channeled through non-profit agencies engaged in development. At the same time, these agencies should be adequately protected from serving as instruments of U.S. foreign policy.

CHART 4

Private Voluntary Assistance 1975	Total ($ millions)	$ Per Capita	Percent of GNP
Switzerland	32	5.01	.08
Sweden	38	4.73	.08
United States	864	3.76	.05
New Zealand	6	2.08	.05
Germany	205	3.32	.05
Canada	67	2.91	.04
Australia	34	2.50	.04
Norway	11	2.65	.04
Belgium	20	2.04	.03
Austria	11	1.47	.03
Netherlands	24	1.72	.03
United Kingdom	53	.95	.02
Denmark	6	.33	.02
Finland	2	.47	.009
France	15	.29	.005
Japan	10	.09	.002
Italy	3	.05	.002

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Charts 1, 3 & 4 are drawn from OECD sources and appear in original form on pages 233-4 Agenda 1977, ODC, Washington

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Food Aid Problems

1. Confusion of purpose. The P.L. 480 food aid program was legislated in 1954 when grain surpluses were mounting in the United States. Partly for that reason, objectives were written into the program that tended to overshadow that of providing food for hungry people. Public Law 480 is described in its own subtitle as: "An act to increase the consumption of United States agricultural commodities in foreign countries, to improve the foreign relations of the United States, and for other purposes." Sometimes these purposes have harmonized; frequently they have collided.

2. Erratic supply. Because the food aid program was aimed primarily at disposing of domestic grain surpluses, the amount of aid has tended to reflect oversupply in this country rather than hunger abroad. Food aid was 9.9 million tons in 1972. But in 1974, at the height of widespread famines in Asia and Africa, assistance shrank to 3.3 million tons. Why? Because grain supplies had dropped, prices had soared, and consequently the funds allocated for food aid bought less.

3. Surplus disposal. On the other hand, when overproduction here has coincided with good harvests abroad, we have increased grain sales* under this program, even though doing so often depressed prices and undercut farmers in the purchasing countries.

*Most of our food-aid commodities are sold, not given away, though the terms are highly concessional.

4. Using food politically. The program has extensively served U.S. political interests. This use of food aid reached its zenith in the famine year of 1974, when a majority of our Food for Peace commodities went to Indochina to shore up the war effort.

In recent years Congress has acted to remedy each of the above problems. Although this action has brought substantial improvement, problems persist.

Recommendations

1. Clarify its purpose. The program should clearly focus on its humanitarian purpose. In the process it will inevitably accomplish other objectives, such as furnishing an outlet for U.S. grain and building friendship with other nations. However, the cause is not well served by including those other factors among the program's objectives. The stated purpose of food aid should indicate the program's single-minded responsiveness to human need.

This implies the following changes: (a) dropping the prohibition against food aid to needy countries such as Laos and Vietnam; (b) eliminating tobacco and cotton from this program; (c) making market development independent of and separate from the P.L. 480 program; (d) no longer reporting as food aid, food that is targeted for countries where security or political advantage is the determining factor. Such aid, if given at all, should be placed in a different category.

2. Stabilize the supply. Dependability of supply is at least as important to food priority countries as is the amount of food aid. So the annual supply should be assured--by international agreement, if possible.

3. Link it to development. Food aid is frequently a response to famine or to the needs of especially vulnerable persons, such as the elderly, children and pregnant or lactating mothers. Aside from these uses--and in connection with them whenever possible--food aid should directly serve the purposes of long-range development and nutritional improvement. Food-for-work projects in which payment in the form of food is made for the building of roads, storage facilities or irrigation canals are illustrations of this. The mark of a good aid program is that it helps people to become self-sufficient rather than dependent upon further aid.

4. Re-examine food aid levels. The level of food aid should be re-examined in the light of developments toward establishing grain reserves; and consideration should be given to the fact that too much food aid or improperly targeted aid can be as deadly as not enough aid. We need to learn when not to send food, as well as when to send it. In this regard, the language of the human rights amendment to the Development and Food Assistance Act of 1977 is instructive. It prohibits a P.L. 480 sales agreement with the government of any country that engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, "unless such agreement will directly benefit the needy people in such country." We might better ask whether any such sales should occur under this program, quite apart from the human rights question, unless the needy people of a country directly benefit. If they do not benefit, food aid may more properly belong in a different category, or even be an inappropriate form of assistance.

THE RIGHT TO FOOD RESOLUTIONS

As passed by the Senate (S.Con.Res. 138)
September 16, 1976, by voice vote

WHEREAS in this Bicentennial Year we reaffirm our national commitment to the inalienable right of all to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, none of which can be realized without food to adequately sustain and nourish life, and we recall that the right to food and freedom from hunger was set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the World Food Conference Declaration of 1974; and

WHEREAS the report entitled "The Assessment of the World Food Situation," prepared for the 1974 World Food Conference, estimated that four hundred and sixty million persons, almost half of them young children, are malnourished; and

WHEREAS nearly half of the human race lives on diets seriously deficient in proteins or other essential nutrients; and

WHEREAS most of this hunger and malnutrition is suffered by the poor in developing countries whose poverty prevents them from obtaining adequate food; and

WHEREAS the demand for food is accelerating and the unprecedented growth in population will add a billion persons to the world's population in less than 15 years; and

WHEREAS the Food and Agriculture Organization, and other recognized authorities, currently estimate that by 1985 the developing countries will experience an annual food deficit of 85 million tons; and

WHEREAS it is in the interest of the United States and all nations to overcome food shortages which cause human suffering and generate economic and political instability; and

WHEREAS the United States proposed, and all nations at the World Conference of 1974 accepted, the bold objective "that within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, that no family will fear for its next day's bread, and that no human being's future and capacities will be stunted by malnutrition"; and

WHEREAS the international community has repeatedly urged the industrialized nations to increase their official development assistance to 0.7 percent of their total national production (GNP); and

WHEREAS the elimination of global hunger and malnutrition cannot succeed without expanded self-help efforts by the developing countries: Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that

(1) the United States reaffirms the right of every person in this country and throughout the world to food and a nutritionally adequate diet; and

(2) the need to combat hunger shall be a fundamental point of reference in the formulation and implementation of United States policy in all areas which bear on hunger including international trade, monetary arrangements, and foreign assistance; and

(3) in the United States, we should seek to improve food assistance programs for all those who are in need, to ensure that all eligible recipients have the opportunity to receive a nutritionally adequate diet, and to reduce unemployment and ensure a level of economic decency for everyone; and

(4) the United States should emphasize and expand its assistance for self-help development among the world's poorest people, especially in countries seriously affected by hunger and malnutrition, with particular emphasis on increasing food production and encouraging more equitable patterns of food distribution and economic growth; and such assistance, in order to be effective, should be coordinated with expanded efforts by international organizations, donor nations, and the recipient countries to provide a nutritionally adequate diet for all.

unofficial transcript

As passed by the House (H.Con.Res. 737)
September 21, 1976, by 340-61

WHEREAS in this Bicentennial Year, we reaffirm our national commitment to the inalienable right of all to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, none of which can be realized without food to adequately sustain and nourish life, and we recall that the right to food and freedom from hunger was set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the World Food Conference Declaration of 1974; and

WHEREAS American agriculture, which encourages individual initiative and efficiency in the production, processing, and distribution of food, has been and is a major source for alleviating malnutrition and famine throughout the world; and

WHEREAS the report entitled "The Assessment of the World Food Situation", prepared for the 1974 World Food Conference, estimated that four hundred and sixty million persons, almost half of them young children, are malnourished; and

WHEREAS nearly half of the human race lives on diets seriously deficient in proteins or other essential nutrients; and

WHEREAS most of this hunger and malnutrition is suffered by the poor in developing countries whose poverty prevents them from obtaining adequate food; and

WHEREAS the demand for food is accelerating and the unprecedented growth in population will add a billion persons to the world's population in less than 15 years; and

WHEREAS the Food and Agriculture Organization, and other recognized authorities, currently estimate that by 1985 the developing countries will experience an annual food deficit of 85 million tons; and the World Food Conference called for rational population policies to help achieve a desirable balance between population and food supply; and

WHEREAS it is in the interest of the United States and all nations to overcome food shortages which cause human suffering and generate economic and political instability; and

WHEREAS the United States proposed, and all nations at the World Food Conference of 1974 accepted, the bold objective "that within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, that no family will fear for its next day's bread, and that no human being's future and capacities will be stunted by malnutrition"; and

WHEREAS the international community has repeatedly urged the industrialized nations to increase their official development assistance; and

WHEREAS the elimination of global hunger and malnutrition cannot succeed without expanded self-help efforts by the developing countries that concentrate on means to increase food production and expand processing and distribution systems;

Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that

(1) the United States reaffirm the right of every person in this country and throughout the world to food and a nutritionally adequate diet; and

(2) the need to combat hunger shall be a fundamental point of reference in the formulation and implementation of United States policy in all areas which bear on hunger including international trade, monetary arrangements, and foreign assistance; and

(3) in the United States, we should seek to improve food assistance programs for all those who are in need, to ensure that all eligible recipients have the opportunity to receive a nutritionally adequate diet; and

(4) the United States should increase substantially its assistance for self-help development among the world's poorest people, especially in countries seriously affected by hunger and malnutrition, with particular emphasis on increasing food production and encouraging improved food distribution and more equitable patterns of economic growth; and such assistance, in order to be effective, should be coordinated with expanded efforts by international organizations, donor nations, and the recipient countries to provide a nutritionally adequate diet for all; and

(5) the President is requested to provide to the Congress not later than April 1, 1977, a five year projection of United States international assistance levels consistent with the objectives set forth in this resolution.

unofficial transcript

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8. Hungry People: The Ethical Issues

A lot of what we have learned so far has helped us to see some of the concrete, specific realities that cause hunger. We have also looked at some things that can be done to help eliminate hunger. When we add up the facts, they speak for themselves. In the end, they all say one thing: Hunger doesn't *have* to exist. We are then left with the question: Why are there so many hungry people? For the answer, maybe we have to look at ourselves and some of the attitudes that exist among us.

Attitudes and Actions

Jim is a senior in high school. He works nights at the department store a couple of blocks from where he lives. He makes good money, and he spends everything he earns. He has a beautiful stereo. His clothes are always the latest styles, and the most expensive brands. He has to stay ahead of a lot of bills. Recently, Jim has been thinking about getting a second job on weekends. He is restless. He badly wants a new car and knows he can only get it if he worked another job. He's pretty sure that the car will make him happy so he's willing to work the extra hours to get it.

1. Who benefits from Jim's job?
2. The things Jim does with his money say something about the kind of person he is. From the information given, write a short description of Jim's personality. Include what he cares about, and where he thinks happiness can be found.
3. Do the choices Jim makes fit into the values of our society? Do they fit in with your values? Explain your response.
4. What values are clearly not present in the choices Jim makes?
5. If everyone in his community was like Jim, what would the community be like?

Carol is also a senior in high school. She works as a volunteer at the local senior citizens center. She just organized a Meals on Wheels program for the elderly people in her area. Her Saturdays are taken up with seeing that the program runs smoothly. One afternoon a week Carol tutors some kids from the local grammar school. She doesn't make any money from these activities, but she gets through the year by carefully budgeting the money she saves from her summer job. Carol likes the work she does with the kids and with the elderly. She thinks it's well worth the time she puts into it.

1. From the way she chooses to spend her time, we can learn something about who Carol is. Describe the kind of things that Carol values.
2. How would Carol's choices be evaluated within our society? Who would appreciate the way she chooses to spend her time?
3. If Carol met Jim, they would probably have an interesting conversation. Create an imaginary dialogue between them. Have the dialogue develop around the things they do with their time and the reasons they have for the choices they make.
4. If everyone in her community was like Carol, what would the community be like?
5. When you look at the choices you make in your own life, who are you more like, Carol or Jim? Are you happy with your answer?

Responsibilities and Rights

Johann is a poor farmer who lives in a small town in Germany with his wife and two children. The town is in the midst of widespread sickness and disease as well as being caught in a severe depression. Johann's family is feeling the full brunt of the crisis. They have gone for days without a full meal and there is no relief in sight.

In the same town, there is a very wealthy baron who is not experiencing any difficulty. Rather, Baron Van Steuben's bakery is producing at capacity and selling the bread in the northern part of the country at a great profit.

Johann decides to go to the Baron and to ask him for several loaves of bread for his family. The Baron will not give Johann any bread because he is not able to pay for it. Later that night, Johann returns to the Baron's bakery and steals seven loaves of bread.

1. What are the moral and ethical questions involved in this decision?
2. Should Johann have stolen the bread? Why?
3. Did the Baron have the responsibility to help Johann? Explain.
4. "No one owns anything absolutely. If I have more than I need and someone else desperately needs something that I have, I have a moral responsibility to share that thing with the person in need." What do you think of the view expressed in this question? What is the theory behind it? Can we develop an ethic based on it?

Attitudes and Systems

The attitudes we have towards situations and things are the basis for our choices. The way we look at things determines what we do. The following debate offers two approaches to the challenge of hungry people in our world. Two attitudes are clearly evident in the approaches that are spelled out in the "Debate on Hunger" which begins on page . Two different understandings of rights, responsibilities, and ways of relating to one another are also very clear. After you read the debate, do the following exercise.

Exercise

1. If you were a person living in a developed country and you read the statement of the Environmental Fund, how would you react to the statement? What kind of attitude would you say the writers of the statement had toward you and the other people living in situations like your own?
2. As a person living in a developed country, how do you react to Bread for the World's reply to the Environmental Fund's statement? What attitude does Bread for the World's statement ask people to have? Would you say that the outlook presented in this statement is the view generally held by our society?
3. Choose the statement you most agree with. Rewrite its basic idea in your own words.
4. If your class were going to adopt one of the two viewpoints offered here, which one would you like to see the class agree and act on? Why?

July 1976
Background paper #8

Debate on Hunger

The Environmental Fund has circulated a statement about world hunger through advertisements in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Smithsonian magazine and elsewhere. Appended to the statement are the names of 39 endorsers, including Garrett Hardin, who originated "lifeboat ethics," and William Paddock, the first to suggest "triage" as a solution to hunger. Hardin and Paddock are directors of The Environmental Fund. Both helped to write the statement, and the views of both are strongly reflected in it. At the request of various BFW members, including directors of Bread for the World, the BFW staff has drafted a reply to The Environmental Fund's statement. The statement and the reply are printed in full below.

The Real Crisis Behind the "Food Crisis"

THE WORLD as we know it will likely be ruined before the year 2,000 and the reason for this will be its inhabitants' failure to comprehend two facts. These facts are:

1. World food production cannot keep pace with the galloping growth of population.

2. "Family planning" cannot and will not, in the forseeable future, check this runaway growth.

The momentum toward tragedy is at this moment so great that there is probably no way of halting it. The only hopeful possibility is to reduce the dimensions of the coming disaster.

We are being misled by those who say there is a serious food shortage. This is not true; world food production this decade is the greatest in history. The problem is too many people. The food shortage is simply evidence of the problem.

It makes no difference whatever how much food the world produces, if it produces people faster.

Some nations are now on the brink of famine because their populations have grown beyond the carrying capacity of their lands. Population growth has pushed the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America onto lands which are only marginally suitable for agriculture. No amount of scientific wizardry or improved weather will change this situation.

For a quarter of a century the United States has been generous with its food surpluses, now vanished. We have given at least 80 billion dollars worth of food and development aid since World War II. The result? Today, the developing world is less able to feed itself than it was before the massive U. S. aid program began. A generation ago, the population of poor countries was increasing by 16 million a year; now it increases by 67 million each year and the imbalance grows.

Furthermore, our past generosity has encouraged a do-nothing policy in the governments of some developing nations. At the 1974 United Nations' meetings in Bucharest and Rome, spokesmen for these nations asserted, incredibly, that they had no population problem. They defended these twin policy statements:

1. The hungry nations have the *right* to produce as many children as they please.

2. Others have the *responsibility* to feed them.

We believe that these statements are irresponsible and indefensible. Any nation that asserts the right to produce more babies must also assume the responsibility for taking care of them.

Some speak optimistically of progress within the hungry nations as evidenced by the modest acceptance of family planning programs in many countries. "Family planning will succeed," they tell us. But how is this possible? Family planning advocates, to gain acceptance, insist that parents everywhere may have as many children as they desire. If the number of children wanted had always been two (on the average) we would not now have a population problem. The crisis exists because parents want more than two children.

In Moslem countries, for example, the desired number of progeny per couple is "as many as God will send." This turns out, on the average, to be seven.

The country which has spent the most money on family planning over the longest period of time (India—24 years) has accomplished virtually nothing. Its population in 1951 grew by 3.6 million. Now it grows 16.2 million each year. Mexico adopted family planning only three years ago and the birth rate there has abruptly risen.

Yet many people insist that it is our moral obligation not only to continue but to increase our aid, totally overlooking the fact that it is impossible, from a practical standpoint. Eighty percent of the world's grain is not grown in the United States. All that we can sell or give away amounts to only 6% of the world's production and less than three

years' population increase, alone, would consume this.

There can be no moral obligation to do the impossible.

No one really likes triage — the selection of those nations most likely to survive and the concentration of our available food aid on them. The question can only arise if we should reach the point where the world population outruns food resources. When such a situation arises, some people will die no matter what the disposition of the inadequate food supply will be. In that event, some hard decisions will have to be made.

At some point, we in the United States are going to find that we cannot provide for the world any more than we can police it.

In summary, our position is this: The sovereign right of each nation to control its own reproduction creates the reciprocal responsibility to care for its own people. The U. S. can help and will — to the limits of our available resources.

The belief that the crisis results from a "shortage" of food leads to disaster. Attempting to deal with this by producing and distributing more food, **while doing nothing about population,** is incubating disaster.

We must not permit our aid to underwrite the failure of some nations to take care of their own. When aid-dependent nations understand that there are limits to our food resources, there is hope that they will tackle their population problems in earnest.

We owe it to posterity — ours and that of the rest of the world — to promote policies that lead to solutions instead of catastrophe.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL FUND, INC.

Our Reply

The Environmental Fund's statement, "The Real Crisis Behind the 'Food Crisis,'" fails both the test of realism and the test of moral responsibility.

THE TEST OF REALISM

1. The statement perpetuates the myth that the real problem behind world hunger is too many people. Readers are led to conclude that unless and until people in the poor countries have smaller families, efforts to assist in their development are doomed to fail, and may in fact be counterproductive.

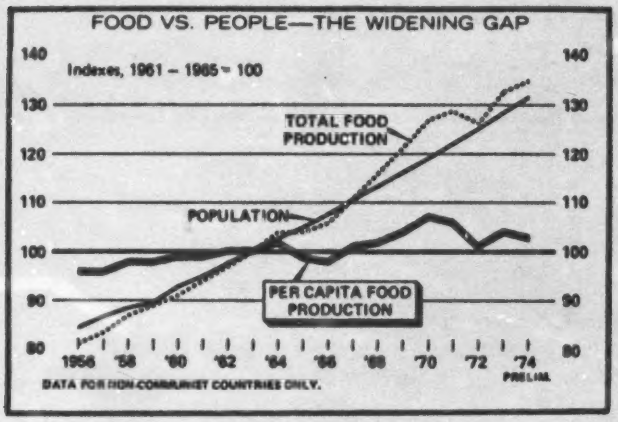
The statement is correct in recognizing the seriousness of rapid population growth as a factor contributing to hunger. But its preoccupation with this factor in isolation from other factors encourages us to get at the problem backwards.

A peasant couple in India, for example, has no social security except for sons who survive to adulthood. Because adequate nourishment and basic health care are often beyond reach, the chance of the couple's losing several children through death is high. Under these conditions a couple typically makes an intelligent economic decision by choosing to have many children. Only when the insecurities of hunger and poverty are substantially reduced do parents voluntarily decide to have small families. Consequently the general rule is that hunger spurs population growth.

China, Taiwan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, and even Kerala, a poor state in India, have sharply lowered their population growth rates. Why? Because minimal but adequate nutrition, health care, basic education, and in most cases jobs are available to all or virtually all of their people. In this context parents tend to have fewer children. Without these gains parents will continue to have many children, no matter how vigorously birth control measures are pushed, precisely because it is not in their best interest to do otherwise. What developing country has substantially lowered its population growth rate apart from social and economic gains that reach the poorest half of its population? Not a single one.

2. The statement implies that the world is producing people faster than it is producing food. According to The Environmental Fund, "It makes no difference whatever how much food the world produces, if it produces people faster." As the graph on the next page indicates, however, for the past two decades world food production has exceeded population increases on a per capita basis

--although food production gains have occurred disproportionately in the rich nations. Poor countries have lagged behind in food production largely because their farmers have not had access to appropriate technologies--including sufficient fertilizer, improved seeds, irrigation, pesticides, storage facilities and transportation--or to basic services such as credit on fair terms, extension services and health care. The result: hunger and rapid population growth.



Source: U.S. Agency for International Development

3. The statement misrepresents the position of developing countries at the Bucharest and Rome conferences. As misrepresented, that position is indeed "irresponsible and indefensible." In fact, however, representatives of those countries took a sharply different position. They said:

> A. The hungry nations have a right to reduce their population growth rates the same way that the United States and other industrialized nations have reduced theirs: within the context of social and economic gains. (Bucharest)
>
> B. The entire community of nations must work together to overcome hunger, and the most important single goal is to enable small farm families in the developing countries to become more food productive. (Rome)

A fair representation of the views of the developing countries at Bucharest and Rome refutes, rather than documents, the position of The Environmental Fund.

4. The statement implies that the United States has done just about everything possible to assist the developing countries, and that "to increase our aid. . . is impossible, from a practical standpoint." This position is simply not true. Our development assistance since World War II was mainly concentrated (a) in Western Europe; and (b) in a few countries, such as South Korea and Taiwan, where security considerations were uppermost. Assistance has often served to meet our own needs rather than the needs of hungry people. Today U.S. development aid to poor countries is 0.24 percent of our national production (GNP). That places us 13th among 18 donor nations. Measured as a percentage of GNP, U.S. assistance is not even one-tenth as much as it was for Europe during the peak of the Marshall Plan. The United States can be generous, but the truth is that we have not yet committed ourselves to a serious global effort against hunger, either in our assistance or in other policies that might give the rural poor access to needed technology and other resources.

5. The statement is unduly pessimistic. It says that "there is probably no way of halting" the world's "momentum toward tragedy." Such pessimism invites despair and moral cynicism, and becomes self-fulfilling because it tends to immobilize people.

THE TEST OF MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

The test of moral responsibility does not pit soft-headed sentiments against hard reality. The biblical view knows no such dichotomy. A misunderstanding of reality and an immoral position often reinforce each other. The statement by The Environmental Fund reflects this weakness. Consider these objections:

1. The statement encourages us to play God with the lives of others. This is an especially acute temptation when we are defending positions of privilege for ourselves. The statement implies that we should hold the line or retrench on assist-

ance, and fails to suggest any other initiative toward enabling development to occur in the poor countries. "We must not permit our aid to underwrite their failure to control population growth," it says. This reflects the mindset of "triage" and "lifeboat ethics." It fails to reflect the fact that "the earth is the Lord's" and that we are stewards, not owners of his earth, accountable for the way in which we use its resources either to enhance or to diminish the lives of others. And it fails, above all, to reflect the extraordinary value that God, our Creator and Savior, places on human life.

2. The statement overlooks our own complicity in the hunger crisis. If the earth's carrying capacity is limited, who is consuming the earth's non-renewable resources? Who are the waste-makers? And who is polluting the environment? Not primarily the people in poor countries, but we in the rich countries. Or why, for example, is most of the fish caught off the coast of Peru used to feed livestock in rich countries? Clearly economic imbalances make many poor countries net exporters of high protein foods to the rich ones, and we are part of this arrangement.

Although it is unfruitful to become preoccupied with the question of who is to blame for hunger, the fact is that some hunger and poverty today is a legacy of practices that were carried out over a long period of time by Western nations, such as the carting off of raw materials from overseas colonies; or having those colonies produce crops for sale abroad rather than for local nourishment; or the bringing of Africans to this country as slaves. Some of these practices are still in effect.

3. The statement blames the victims (a conventional response of the privileged) and offers the rest of us an excuse for doing nothing. It encourages throughout a we/they mentality: "We" the generous are pitted against "them" the irresponsible. Missing is any sense of our common humanity or a recognition that we are all children of God, albeit living under strikingly different circumstances.

4. The statement carries an unspoken value judgment that our lives are more important than millions of other lives. "The problem is too many people," it says. Could the problem instead, or at least also, be too little willingness on our part to share and to create more just conditions? Instead of suggesting that we make modest adjustments so that the poor have access to means that will enable them to work their way out of hunger, the statement invites a siege mentality in which we preserve and enhance our own inordinate share of the earth and let others starve.

5. The statement should be read with these questions in mind: Does it appeal to the best or the worst in us? Does it turn us inward or does it help us to reach out to others? Is it life-affirming or life-denying? Is it concerned with the well-being and preservation of others or solely with the protection of ourselves and our own advantages? These questions help us to assess the statement and they lead us to find it morally unacceptable.

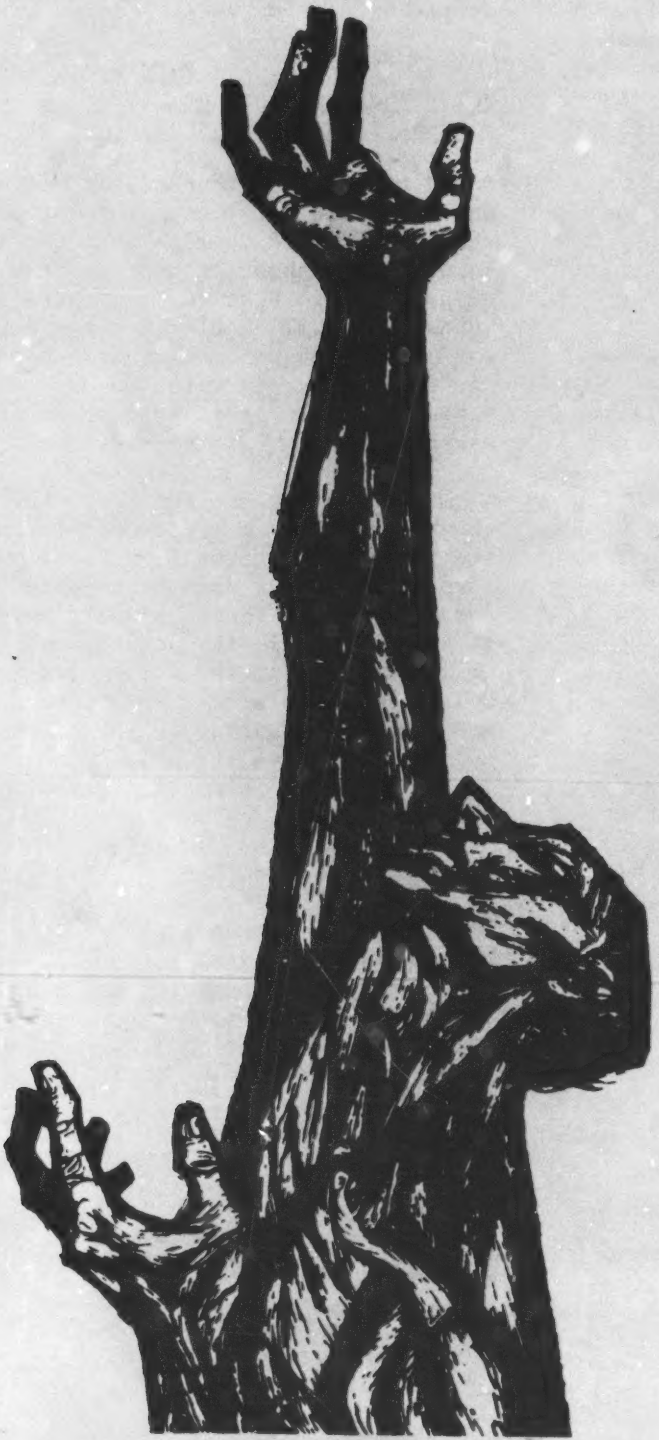
CONCLUSION

The statement represents a position that has been overwhelmingly rejected by the churches as incompatible with Christian faith. For some of the same reasons noted above the statement is clearly incompatible with the religious and ethical tradition of many others, as well.

July, 1976

bread for the world

9. Biblical Perspectives on Hunger



A Passion for Justice

"But what does that have to do with God and our religion?" he said to her with a great deal of annoyance in his voice. Joe was arguing again with his teenage daughter Susan about her involvement in several social justice groups in their community. "I raised my children to be good, faithful Christians. They go to church on Sundays, pray every day and at each meal, read the Bible regularly and support the work of the church," he said.

"Dad, I do all those things and they are important to me, but there is more to being a Christian than what you suggested. The Lord is asking us to be concerned about the poor and the hungry, to have a passion for justice just like the prophets in the Old Testament, just like Jesus," Susan replied.

" 'A passion for justice'? You mean to tell me that God has a passion for justice? Where did you get such a crazy idea?"

Where did Susan get her ideas? Did she dream them up? Or get them from some misguided pastor? Or is a passionate concern for justice part of what it means to be a follower of Jesus?

When we examine the scriptures we find out that Susan is on target. The great biblical scholar Gerhard von Rad once wrote, "There is absolutely no concept in the Old Testament with so central a significance for all relationships of human life as that of justice." [1] In his essay "Biblical Perspectives on Justice", John Donahue describes justice as "fidelity to the demands of a relationship." [2] For the people of the Old Testament the social context of living was self-evident. One did not live alone. One lived in relationship. To live literally meant to live with others. One was in relationship with Yahweh because of the covenant that existed between Yahweh and Israel. As a member of this covenant community each person was in relationship with every other Israelite, especially the poor and the needy, with one's family and even with strangers and aliens. Out of these relationships arose responsibilities and demands. The just person was faithful to the responsibilities and demands of the various relationships in his or her life.

Partners in Creation

In the opening pages of Genesis we read of God's justice which flows from his love. He cares for his creatures by giving them various fruits and nuts and grains to serve the needs of the human family. The Psalmist reminds us of God's goodness to his creatures:

> You make grass grow for the cattle and plants for man to use, so that he can grow his crops and produce wine to make him happy, olive oil to make him cheerful, and bread to give him strength. (Psalm 104: 14-15)

The Lord gives his people all that they need and invites human beings to participate with him in the on-going work of creation. For the Hebrews, unlike the Greeks, creation was not a static event but an on-going process. The Lord invites his creatures to enter into relationship with him in creating the world by caring for it and bringing it to fulfillment.

"Let My People Go": The Cry of Yahweh

The justice of God is most vividly portrayed in Yahweh's concern for his people when they were in Egypt. The people of Israel were in bondage and slavery. They cried out to God for help (Exodus 2:23-25). Yahweh called Moses to deliver his people from slavery and bring them into the land of freedom:

> Then the Lord said, "I have seen how cruelly my people are being treated in Egypt; I have heard them cry out to be rescued from their slave drivers. I know all about their sufferings, and so I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and to bring them out of Egypt to a fertile and spacious land, one which is rich and fertile. . . . (Exodus 3:7-8)

Yahweh's action is one of involvement with His people. He is concerned with their liberation and salvation in their historical context. Yahweh is the God who saves his people from oppression and injustice because of his love and justice.

The Exodus is the fundamental experience for the Jewish people. Every year the community of Israel was to gather to celebrate and therefore re-live the Exodus. They were to remember that their God who is the true God is the one who frees them from oppression and injustice. If they are to be faithful to God, they also must do justice towards others and free the oppressed. That same imperative remains for all who read and believe the Word of God.

Yahweh: Defender of the Oppressed

In the legal tradition as represented in the covenant code and the Deuteronomic legislation, we find the theme of concern for the oppressed and the poor of the society:

> Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner; remember that you were foreigners in Egypt. Do not mistreat any widow or orphan. (Exodus 22:21-22)

> At the end of every third year bring the tithe of all your crops and store it in your towns. This food is for the Levites, since they own no property, and for the foreigners, orphans, and widows who live in your towns. They are to come and get all they need. Do this, and the Lord your God will bless you in everything you do. (Deuteronomy 14:28-29)

This concern for the oppressed and the poor is not accidental. It is at the core of what the Israelites are called to be. It is an intrinsic part of their vocation. This is so because of the covenant but even more importantly, this is fundamental for the Israelites because it is who Yahweh is by nature. Yahweh is the defender of the oppressed, the One who liberates His people from slavery, the One who feeds the hungry. We need only think back to the passage from Exodus that was quoted above or read the following texts to see Yahweh revealed in this way:

> He (the Lord your God) makes sure that orphans and widows are treated fairly; he loves the foreigners who live with our people, and gives them food and clothes. (Deut. 10:18)

> The Lord judges in favor of the oppressed and gives them their rights. (Psalm 103:6)

Or, as we hear in the hymn of praise in the one hundred and forty sixth psalm:

> (The Lord) judges in favor of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free and gives sight to the blind. He lifts those who have fallen; he loves his righteous people. He protects the strangers who live in our land; he helps widows and orphans (Psalm 146: 7-9)

Exercise

1. How does Susan's understanding of what it means to be a Christian differ from that of her father's? What do you think of Susan's view of Christianity?
2. What does Yahweh reveal about Himself in the Exodus experience? In the legal tradition and in the Psalms?
3. What experiences are there in the world today that are similar to the experience of the Jewish people in Egypt?
4. Psalm 24 starts off with these words: "The world and all that is in it belong to the Lord." If we believe these words to be true, what would they suggest about how we ought to view our relationship with the earth's resources?

Share Your Bread with the Hungry: The Message of the Prophets

Throughout her history, the prophets have had to remind Israel to remain faithful to the covenant

with Yahweh and to act justly. Their primary mission is to lead the people back to the path of righteousness and justice and not to be predicting the future. The prophets are sent by Yahweh to speak his word and also to speak on behalf of those who have no voice.

Yahweh complains through the prophets because his people forget who it is that gives them their lands and provisions: "She would never acknowledge that I am the one who gave her the grain, the wine, the olive oil, and all the silver and gold..." (Hosea 2:8). The people of Israel continually forget that their task in the world is "to do what is just, to show constant love and to live in humble fellowship with our God" (Micah 6:8). They who once were hungry and oppressed refused now to feed the hungry and have themselves become the oppressors. The people of Israel have become fools. They speak folly and leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied. (see Isaiah 32:6)

Amos, one of the earliest prophets, is one of the strongest in calling the people back to justice. Israel was at the height of her economic and political power when Yahweh sent the poor shepherd Amos to the people to announce his word among them. They had made many transgressions against the covenant. One of these was that "they trample down the weak and helpless and push the poor out of the way." (Amos 2:7) Amos announces the punishment of God on the people because they "oppressed the poor and robbed them of their grain." (Amos 5:11). The injustice that the rich engage in completely negates the value of their worship:

> The Lord says 'I hate your religious festivals; I cannot stand them! When you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; I will not accept the animals you have fattened to bring me as offerings. Stop your noisy songs; I do not want to listen to your harps. Instead, let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry.' (Amos 5:21-24)

When there is no justice, life is barren and worship of Yahweh a sham.

In Chapter 58 of the Book of Isaiah the people come to the Lord in prayer and fasting. They wanted Yahweh to answer them but no answer was forthcoming. When Yahweh does speak to them he criticizes them for the kind of fasting that they practice because "at the same time you fast, you pursue your own interests and oppress your workers." The kind of fast that Yahweh wants is this:

> Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear, and do not refuse to help your own relatives. (Isaiah 58:6-7)

When the people of Israel fulfill these precepts then the Lord will reward them:

> Then my favor will shine on you like the morning sun, and your wounds will be quickly healed. I will always be with you to save you; my presence will protect you on every side....if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. (Isaiah 58:8-10)

What this brief survey of the Old Testament has attempted to point out is the consistent concern for the poor and oppressed that characterizes the God of the people of Israel. The people of Israel are faithful to Yahweh when they are just in their dealings and relationships with others, especially the poor and afflicted. This theme is found from the earliest writings of the Old Testament through the prophets and into the intertestamental period.

Prepare the Way of the Lord

When we turn to the New Testament we find these same themes. John the Baptist, who prepares the way for Christ's public ministry, exhorts his hearers to change their lives. When the crowd asked him what to do, John replied in clear and certain terms:

> Whoever has two shirts must give one to the man who has none, and whoever has food must share it. (Luke 3:11)

The Work of Justice: Jesus' Ministry

Jesus characterized his own ministry in terms of service to the poor, the outcasts and the downtrodden. Early in his public ministry Jesus enters the synagogue and reads from the prophet Isaiah, to describe his own ministry:

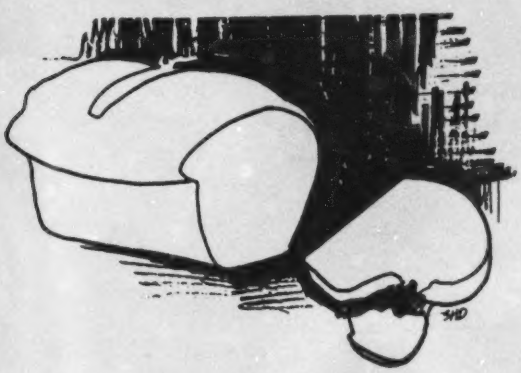
> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people. (Luke 4:18-19)

He who is the Servant of the Lord has a special concern for the outcasts and lowly ones of his society.

Jesus knows hunger personally. The Synoptic Gospels record his long fast in the desert before he began his public ministry. After the fast he was hungry (Matthew 4:2; Luke 4:2). His own experi-

ence of having been hungry in the desert provides him with a deep compassion for those who are hungry. He defends his disciples when they were criticized by the Pharisees for plucking corn on the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-28; Matthew 12:1-8; John 6:1-13). They were hungry and should eat if they could just as David had done in the past. His compassion for those who are hungry is also seen in his concern for the crowds who had come to hear him preach. He will not let them go away hungry so he feeds them (Mark 6:30-44; Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 8:1-10; John 6:1-13).

Paul reminds us that Jesus "rich as he was, he made himself poor for your sake, in order to make you rich by means of his poverty" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus is the Poor One among us. He identifies himself with the poor and hungry and those who suffer and are in need of help. Christians thus come face to face with a great mystery. God in Christ is present in a special way in the poor and hungry.



We are all familiar with the passage from the Gospel of Matthew that appears on page 62. Perhaps it is too well known. Maybe we have read it too often without really reflecting on what it means. Read the passage over quietly, as if you were reading it for the first time. Jesus identifies himself with those who are in need. Christ represents himself to us in a special way in the hungry, the naked, the sick, and the prisoner. He is among us in the outcasts and oppressed of our age. Their cry for justice is his cry for justice.

Paul's writing as well as other material in the New Testament gives us some insights into the early church's concern for the poor and hungry. One of the signs of this new community was their care for those in need. Following the way of the Lord the early church found ways to care for the hungry, the poor and the needy. They adapted to their time and circumstances to meet the needs of the poor, seeking to find the most appropriate ways to imitate the Lord's own care and concern for the needy.

Obviously the Bible does not offer us a ten-point program or five-year plan of action against hunger. Rather the scriptures point the way and give us a vision of a new creation. It keeps before us the Kingdom of God and the hope of a new heaven and a new earth. The Kingdom of God stands as a yardstick against which all existing institutions, social systems and relationships are to be judged.

We live in a world where hundreds of millions of people are hungry. Our previous discussions and study have made us aware of the importance of public policy in the struggle to eliminate hunger and malnutrition. Without the resources that governments alone can command, hunger will continue to affect the lives of many of the earth's people. To be a Christian means, among other things, to bear witness to the Kingdom of God and to stand with our hungry sisters and brothers. As Christians in the United States we have the opportunity to use the gift of our citizenship on behalf of the hungry poor. The question is will we?

Footnotes for Chapter 9

[1]Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans D.M.G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Bros., 1962), Volume I page 370.

[2]John R. Donahue, S.J., "Biblical Perspectives on Justice" in John C. Haughey, ed., *The Faith That Does Justice*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1977) page 68.

a bread for the world bible study

When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry?

The Final Judgment

"When the Son of Man comes as King, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his royal throne, and all the earth's people will be gathered before him. Then he will divide them into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats: he will put the sheep at his right and the goats at his left. Then the King will say to the people on his right, 'You that are blessed by my Father: come! Come and receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.' The righteous will then answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?' The King will answer back, 'I tell you, indeed, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Away from me, you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels! I was hungry but you would not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me drink; I was a stranger but you would not welcome me in your homes, naked but you would not clothe me; I was sick and in prison but you would not take care of me.' Then they will answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we would not help you?' The King will answer them back, 'I tell you, indeed, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me.' These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment; the righteous will go to eternal life."

Matthew 25.31-46 **

See back for Bible Study related to this passage

***From the Good News Bible—Old Testament: Copyright c American Bible Society, 1976; New Testament: Copyright c American Bible Society, 1966, 1971, 1976*

Bible Study on Matthew 25:31-46
(or Notes Toward the Formation of a Sermon)

1. Considering this text, what is the relationship between faith and action? (Cf. Matthew 7:21, Ephesians 2:8-10, James 2:14-17)

2. This text is the climax of two chapters in which the sayings of Jesus about "last things" are grouped together. It does not stand alone. Preceding it the parable of the three servants makes the point that those who properly await the return of Jesus do not just go about their own business, but actively carry out his instructions. To leave no doubt about what those instructions are, Jesus gives the dramatic picture of the last judgment.

How does our hope in the resurrection relate to our life in the world now? (Cf. Romans 6:4, 1 Corinthians 15:58).

3. The Lord's Supper (communion, the eucharist) is a meal in which we recognize the presence of Jesus now and look forward to reunion with him in the resurrection. In what way might the text in Matthew 25 inform our understanding of the Lord's Supper?

4. Surprise is the reaction of both "sheep" and "goats". Why?

5. "When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry...?" they ask. Do we see the hungry today? Or do we fail to see?

In our world:

> Item: "Every half minute 100 children are born in developing countries. Twenty of them will die within the year. Of the 80 who survive, 60 will have no access to modern medical care during their childhood. An equal number will suffer from malnutrition during their crucial early years."—the U.S. Committee for UNICEF.
>
> Item: Maurice Williams, executive director of the United Nations World Food Council, warns "that there are probably more hungry and malnourished people in 1979 than the 450 million to whom the 1974 (World Food) conference directed its attention."

In our country:

> Item: "The fact is no one around here has any [food] stamps left by the last week of the month even though most of our diet consists of beans, potatoes and corn bread. The price of food is going up every day, and the small raises in our stamps we get from time to time in no way match the cost of food prices."—Daniel Mullins, Black Lung victim, Kentucky.

6. "I was hungry and you fed me." What does this suggest about the presence of Jesus and our relationship to him?

7. What are some of the standard attitudes toward poor people that may prevent us from seeing Jesus as he comes to us through them?

8. What is the link between "receiving" the kingdom (verse 34) and celebrating the kingdom now? Between the judgment of separation from Jesus and separation from him now?

9. How can we feed the hungry when hunger is so widespread and complex? Steps we can take are: 1.Direct aid. 2. Effective assistance through citizen action.

> Item: The National Academy of Sciences, in its presidentially commissioned report, World Food and Nutrition Study, concludes that the means are available to overcome hunger, but that we can do so only "if there is the political will." Bread for the World, a Christian citizens' movement, has shown that when Christians work together even in relatively small numbers, they can play a decisive role in shaping important national decisions on hunger, such as acceptance of the "right to food" as a public policy, establishment of a U.S. farmer-held grain reserve, and reforms of the food stamp and food aid programs.

What legislation now before Congress or on the horizon could, with our help, offer opportunity for hungry people?

**Sources include the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, United Nations World Food Council, the National Academy of Sciences.

Sermon Offer

A brief sermon based upon seemingly contradictory advice in Galatians 6 is available at no charge from Bread for the World. The two verses discussed are "Bear one another's burdens" and "Each man will have to bear his own load." Simply send a stamped and self-addressed envelope with your request. The sermon may be useful in reaching people. It was prepared by Edward C. May, director of the Office on World Community of Lutheran World Ministries.

10. What Are the Churches Saying and Doing About Hunger?

In his book, **Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger,** Ron Sider tells the following story:

A group of devout Christians once lived in a small village at the foot of a mountain. A winding, slippery road with hairpin curves and steep precipices without guard rails wound its way up one side of the mountain and down the other. There were frequent fatal accidents. Deeply saddened by the injured people who were pulled from the wrecked cars, the Christians in the village's three churches decided to act. They pooled their resources and purchased an ambulance so that they could rush the injured to the hospital in the next town. Week after week, church volunteers gave faithfully, even sacrificially, of their time to operate the ambulance twenty-four hours a day. They saved many lives although some victims remained crippled for life.

Then one day, a visitor came to town. Puzzled, he asked why they did not close the road over the mountain and build a tunnel instead. Startled at first, the ambulance volunteers quickly pointed out that this approach (although technically quite possible) was not realistic or advisable. After all, the narrow mountain road had been there for a long time. Besides, the mayor would bitterly oppose the idea. (He owned a large restaurant and service station halfway up the mountain.) [1]

Exercise

1. What was the difference between the approac of the village people and that of the visitor?
2. Which response would get at the cause of th problem?
3. The visitor suggested that the church people g to see the mayor to talk about building a tunn and proposed that if the mayor would not sup port the idea of building a tunnel, that the should elect a new mayor. Do Christians have responsibility to act in such a fashion? Pleas explain your answer.

The Churches and the Hungry

Generally speaking, the churches of every Chris tian denomination have long been engaged i hunger relief programs aimed at feeding th hungry. Only in the 1970's, however, have most o them begun to move beyond relief toward a mor holistic approach to the problem of global hunger In October, 1975, the Governing Board of the Na tional Council of Churches issued a policy state ment on "Human Hunger and the World Food Crisis," which signaled this shift on the part o most of the churches related to the NCC. In part it said:

From its beginnings, the Christian community, i response to the teachings and example of Jesu Christ, has expressed compassion for hungry peo ple... Yet... often times because of our institu tional affluence, our role as owner of lands an buildings and institutions, our materialistic men tality and values, and our involvement and identi fication with social, economic and political estab lishments, we have lost sight of the Biblical man date to identify ourselves with the plight of th poor, and to seek bread and justice for all... W invite the constituent communions of this Coun cil, regional and local ecumenical agencies, an concerned persons of every faith to join us in search for ways to eliminate hunger and its causes from the earth. [2]

The statement proceeds to catalogue causes of th world food crisis, theological bases for hope, an goals for action by Christians. It deals also wit the responsibilities of Christians and Christian in

stitutions, and recommends specific public policy changes which would help to deal with the problems of hunger.

Evangelical bodies not related to the NCC have also been moving toward a more holistic approach to global hunger. In 1974, the **Lausanne Covenant**, drawn up at the International Congress on World Evangelization called by Billy Graham and other evangelical leaders from all continents, said, in part:

All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it. Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple life-style...[3]

In September, 1976, the **Basel Letter**, issued by the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship, stated:

We should resist the demands which the powerful make to obtain benefits and privileges for themselves, and call upon the state to promote equal justice for all, especially for the poor, the orphan, and the widow...[4]

The **Chicago Declaration** of the founding meeting of Evangelicals for Social Action in 1973 affirmed that evangelical Christians cannot separate their lives in Christ from the world situation, and stated:

We must attack the materialism of our culture and the maldistribution of the nation's wealth and services. We recognize that as a nation we play a crucial role in the imbalance and injustice of international trade and development. Before God and a billion hungry neighbors, we must rethink our values regarding our present standard of living and promote more just acquisition and distribution of the world's resources.[5]

By 1975, many churches had established hunger task forces both at the national and middle judicatory levels. Late in 1975, a consortium of NCC-related denominations formed WHEAT (World Hunger Education Action Together) as a cooperative hunger education and mobilization effort. A series of WHEAT enabling events were held across the country to train a corps of enablers to assist with their denominational hunger efforts on the middle judicatory level.

Several of those denominations developed a WHEAT Covenant as a tool for mobilizing their constituencies on hunger. Covenanters commit themselves to active involvement on the hunger issue in one or more of the following areas of concern: (1) intensive study, (2) hunger action in their own communities, (3) public policy advocacy efforts on behalf of the hungry, (4) increased financial support for their local church, denominational, and ecumenical hunger efforts, and (5) lifestyle change. Those who commit themselves on (3), public policy advocacy, are encouraged to join Bread for the World and/or IMPACT.

The bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, meeting in the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960's, challenged Catholics to identify themselves with the poor and afflicted of this world. "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ." (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in the Modern World).

By 1965, the Catholic Church was laboring to put the hunger issue in the most stark ethical terms and, at the same time, to show the framework in which a more just distribution of the earth's wealth could be managed. This meant calling not only for a re-examination of the arms race, but also of prevailing ways of ownership in light of crying human needs. The following seminal passage from the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World is among the strongest in the entire document for two reasons. First, it calls prevailing economic institutions into question; and, second, it insists on seeing hunger primarily as a moral issue.

God intended the earth with everything contained in it for the use of all human beings and peoples. Thus, under the guidance of justice together with charity, created goods should be in abundance for all in an equitable manner. Whatever the forms of property may be, as adapted to the legitimate institutions of peoples, according to diverse and changeable circumstances, attention must always be paid to this universal goal of earthly goods. In using them, therefore, man should regard the external things that he legitimately possesses not only as his own but also as common in the sense that they should be able to benefit not only him but others as well. On the other hand, the right of having a share of earthly goods sufficient for oneself and one's family belongs to everyone.

The Fathers and Doctors of the Church held this opinion, teaching that men are obliged to come to the relief of the poor and to do so not merely out of their superfluous goods. If one is in extreme necessity, he has the right to procure for himself what he needs out of the riches of others. Since there are so many people prostrate with hunger in the world, this Sacred Council urges all, both individuals and governments, to remember the aphorism of the Fathers, 'Feed the man dying of hunger, because if you have not fed him, you have killed him,' and really to share and use their earthly goods, according to the ability of each, especially by supporting individuals or peoples with the

aid by which they may be able to help and develop themselves.[6]

When Pope John Paul II was in the United States in October of 1979, he challenged fellow Christians to be involved in the seeking of justice for the poor and afflicted. While affirming the importance of responding in charity to the immediate needs of the hungry and poor he also said that more was needed:

Social thinking and social practice inspired by the Gospel must always be marked by a special sensitivity towards those who are most in distress, those who are extremely poor, those suffering from all the physical, mental and moral ills that afflict humanity, including hunger, neglect, unemployment and despair. There are many poor people of this sort around the world. There are many in your own midst. On many occasions, your nation has gained a well-deserved reputation for generosity, both public and private. Be faithful to that tradition, in keeping with your vast possibilities and present responsibilities. The network of charitable works of each kind that the Church has succeeded in creating here is a valuable means effectively mobilizing generous undertakings aimed at relieving the situations of distress that continually arise both at home and elsewhere in the world.

But this is not enough. Within the frame-work of your national institutions and in cooperation with all your compatriots, you will also want to seek out the structural reasons which foster or cause the different forms of poverty in the world and in your own country, so that you can apply the proper remedies. You will not allow yourselves to be intimidated or discouraged by oversimplified explanations, which are more ideological than scientific—explanations which try to account for a complex evil by some single cause.

But neither will you recoil before the reforms — even profound ones—of attitudes and structures that may prove necessary in order to re-create over and over again the conditions needed by the disadvantaged if they are to have a fresh chance in the hard struggle of life. The poor of the United States and of the world are your brothers and sisters in Christ. You must never be content to leave them just the crumbs from the feast. You must take of your substance, and not just of your abundance, in order to help them. And you must treat them like guests at your family table.[7]

The Catholic Bishops of the United States invited Catholics to respond to the plight of the hungry in much the same way as the WHEAT Covenant Program does. In their statement **The World Food Crisis: A Pastoral Plan of Action**, the bishops called for a "series of interrelated activities at the level of public policy/legislative program, community information and education, and pastoral practice."

Exercise

1. What kinds of response to the hungry are being urged by the leaders of the churches in this country? How do these differ from the purely relief efforts of the past?
2. What do you think of this statement: "If one is in extreme necessity, he has the right to procure for himself what he needs out of the riches of others."?
3. By the church responding to the needs of the hungry, is it engaged in something essential to its mission to preach the Gospel of Jesus? Explain your answer.

Responding to the Needs of the Hungry

In the face of disasters, emergencies, and the need for relief, the churches through their relief and development agencies are quick to respond to the needs of those who suffer. Here are two examples of the churches' agencies responding to emergency situations. The first example comes from Church World Service.

The most dramatic effort of 1979 for the Southern Asia Office was the establishment of a CWS relief program in Kampuchea (Cambodia). A once serene and productive country, Kampuchea has been decimated over the past decade by wars, including unprecedented bombing, political upheaval and most recently, the total dissolution of its social structure.

In the fall of 1979 it became impossible for international agencies to respond to the starvation and critical health needs of the Khmer people. CWS responded by supporting the World Council of Churches/Church of Christ in Thailand Refugee Relief Program at the Thai/Kampuchean border and by opening an office in Phnom Penh, Kampuchea, where CWS staff supervised the distribution of air and sea shipments of rice, high protein food, medicines, intravenous solutions with administration units, blankets, fish nets and agriculture equipment. Near the end of the year, CWS invited five other American voluntary agencies to join CWS in forming a coalition of organizations committed to relief and rehabilitation in Kampuchea.

CWS also responded to the unique problems of rural communities in Thailand which have been dislocated due to regional tensions. The CWS subregional Office in Bangkok is a focal point for those desiring an informed vantage point in Indochinese affairs.[8]

Another important work that the churches are engaged in is seen in this example from Catholic Relief Services.

In 18 African countries, Catholic Relief Services sponsors Mother and Child health centers which benefit an estimated 1.6 million people annually. A major component of the program is a system of growth surveillance which measures a child's growth from birth to age 12 and graphically depicts it relative to an accepted standard.

Each child enrolled in the program has a chart on which his weight is recorded every month. The curves preprinted on the chart represent an adequate rate of growth. If the child is malnourished, his weight will fall below the acceptable margin and both the mother and the health counsellor will be able to take steps to remedy the problem before it results in permanent damage.

Malnutrition, in addition to stunting physical growth, impairs learning capacity and can cause irreparable retardation. Malnourished children frequently grow up to be less productive adults with little or no chance of overcoming the conditions that have entrapped generations before them into lives of poverty. Catholic Relief Services operates Mother and Child health programs throughout the world to help prevent malnutrition in the vulnerable children of the under-five age group.[9]

In addition to these kinds of activities, the churches in the United States have been moving toward a more comprehensive approach to the problem of world hunger. They are increasingly involved in projects of people helping themselves. Consider this example from Honduras.

In Honduras, a small group of bakers who tried to form a union lost their jobs. They decided to form a cooperative and were able to rent a locale, construct an oven, and purchase ingredients. But the group was hampered by a lack of capital, equipment, and a vehicle to distribute their products. A grant of US$13,500 from CRS covered these needs, as well as paid for courses in cooperativism and management. This will enable the group to increase the income of the 20 bakers, expand the membership, and ensure the availability of low-cost, high quality baked goods to several barrios in the city of El Progresso, and a number of nearby rural communities. A side benefit of their works has been to hold down the prices established by larger producers. When an intended increase of 20% was announced, the co-op decided to maintain the lower price. Despite their limited production, the competition forced the other bakers to again lower their prices to the benefit of all the poor in the region.[10]

Additional efforts that have been attempted include the following:

—Church-related relief agencies are in various stages of re-evaluation and most are increasing their support of self-development projects which seek long-term solutions to the hunger problem.
—There is a growing recognition that domestic and global hunger are inextricably related, and must be addressed simultaneously.
—Increasingly, churches are encouraging their members to re-examine the biblical understanding of stewardship in the light of limited global resources, and to develop a simpler and less consumptive life-style.
—There is a growing recognition that the policies and practices of both government and transnational corporations must be scrutinized and influenced if the churches expect to make significant gains against hunger.
—More and more churches are encouraging their members to join in the public policy advocacy efforts of Bread for the World, whose members seek policies that address the underlying causes of hunger from their own grassroots congressional district base.

Discussion Questions

1. What programs does your church have that already have been carrying out the concerns that were mentioned in this essay?

2. What needs to be done within your local church to further involve us in seeking justice for the hungry?
3. What are the possible objections that people in the congregation might raise to the church becoming involved in the hunger issue? How can we deal with these objections?
4. Does your common worship include the concerns of the poor and hungry?
5. "Food is a unique commodity and a sacred resource." Does this attitude prevail in your home? What can we do to promote this appreciation for the gift of food?
6. Imagine yourself as part of a new Christian community. What would you want your church to do about world hunger? Explain your answer.

Prayer/Reflection

In his final meal with the disciples, Jesus gave them an example of the kind of leadership he wanted in his new kingdom. Read Chapter 13 of the Gospel according to John. Pray that the churches may more faithfully imitate the example of Jesus.

Footnotes for Chapter 10

[1]Ron Sider, *Rich Christians in An Age of Hunger,* Intervarsity Press/Paulist Press. Pp. 203-204.
[2]National Council of Churches' Policy Statement "Human Hunger and the World Food Crisis," 1975.
[3]International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne Covenant, 1974.
[4]Theological Commission, World Evangelical Fellowship, "Basel Letter," 1976.
[5]Evangelicals for Social Action, Chicago Declaration, 1973.
[6]Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, #69.
[7]Pope John Paul II, Homily at Yankee Stadium, October 2, 1979.
[8]Church World Service, Annual Report, 1979. P. 16.
[9]Catholic Relief Services promotional material.
[10]Example provided by the staff of Catholic Relief Services.

11. Bread for the World

"What can we do?"

Jack and Marge Hopkins are a concerned couple who have been asking themselves how they can respond to the needs of the hungry. "We give regularly to the church's relief and development agency and when there was that special appeal for the people of Cambodia, we gave half of our week's salary. We even help out at the community food bank occasionally," Jack told his pastor. Marge jumped in before Bill had a chance to respond to Jack, by saying, "And besides that, Bill, Jack and I are fasting one day a month and are trying to pray every day for the hungry of the world. But we both feel that there is more to be done, that there is more that we could do. We don't think that we should go to the developing world to be missionaries. But there has got to be more for us to do."

"Last week I was at this ecumenical clergy meeting and this woman, Mary Hutchinson—you know her, the woman with five kids on Maple Street—spoke to us about a movement called Bread for the World. She is their district coordinator. I was impressed with what she had to say. Why don't you read over their literature and let's see if we can get something started here at our church. Come to think of it, it might be a good idea to give Mary Hutchinson a call and talk to her about this Bread for the World thing," the pastor said.

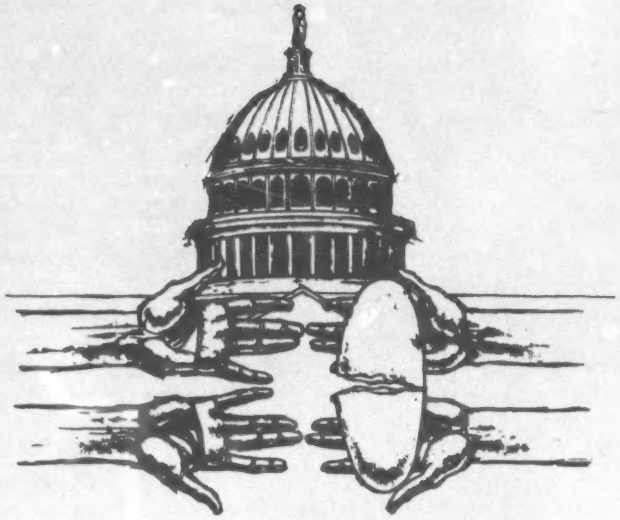
The questions that Jack and Marge Hopkins are asking themselves are being asked by many Christians across the United States. Many of them are discovering a small but growing movement in the churches called Bread for the World, a Christian citizens' movement on hunger.

How It Began

The beginnings of Bread for the World can be traced to a small meeting of Christians in New York City in October, 1972. They came together to share their concerns about world hunger and poverty and to reflect on what the churches were doing—and not doing—about the problem.

They concluded that the churches had exhibited two great strengths and one critical weakness in this area. The strengths: a solid track record in world relief and perceptive top-level pronouncements on the issues. The weakness: a seeming inability to move from pronouncements to local-level Christian action.

The group felt that Christians should be helping to shape public policy relating to hunger. They concluded that the best way to enable this would be to organize, in every congressional district across the land, a nucleus of Christians committed to reaching their members of Congress or other government officials on targeted issues that affect hungry people. They envisioned a "citizens' lobby"—not a lobby of professionals in Washington, but of voters from the grassroots level willing to advocate the cause of hungry people to their elected representatives.



In the Spring of 1973, Bread for the World announced its formation in New York City. The organizing committee of seven Protestants and seven Catholics had neither staff nor money. But several hundred people in New York City responded to an appeal for membership at $10 a year—enough encouragement to prompt groundwork for organizing nationally.

How It Grew

In May, 1974, there were some 450 members of Bread for the World, most in New York City. By July 1, 1980, the number had climbed to over 33,000, and Bread for the World had members in every state and congressional district in the nation. A grassroots citizen action network was developed in every state, with coordinating committees in 310 of the 435 congressional districts.

How It Works

"Hi, Meg, this is John Harrison. I have a quick-line message for you." "Hold on for a minute, Jack, and I'll get a piece of paper," Meg respond-

ed. "The message is: Phone the office of Senator McGovern urging him to work to ensure that the Supplemental Appropriations Bill includes $142 million in food aid to provide additional emergency aid for East Africa and Cambodia," John said.

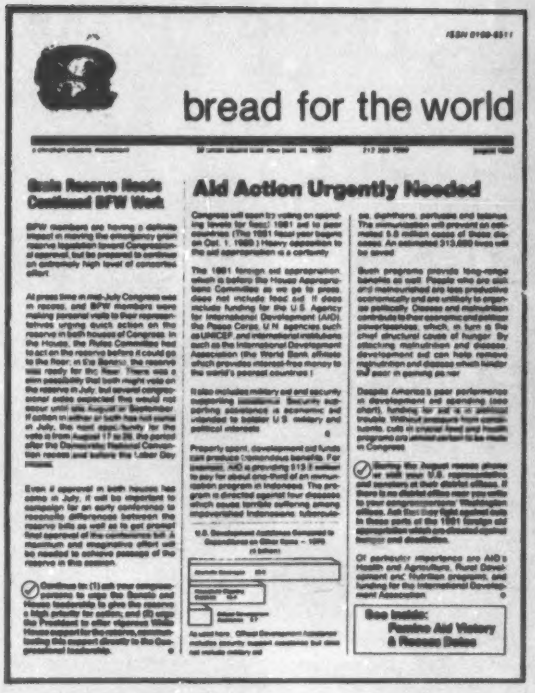
"Thanks, Jack. I'll call McGovern's office right away and call my two contacts on the quickline. Talk to you soon," Meg said.

The conversation between Meg and John illustrates how part of the Bread for the World citizen action network works. At times it is important for Bread for the World members and other concerned citizens to get in touch with their elected representatives in the quickest way possible on issues that vitally affect hungry people. After Meg got off the phone with John, she called McGovern's office and then two other Bread for the World members with the same message. In this way, many people are able to get in touch with their representative to advocate the cause of the hungry.

Bread for the World aims to attract a broad range of faithful Christians who see the public policy dimension of the hunger issue. Many have never considered themselves political activists, but they are committed to Christ and share his compassion for others. They have come to recognize that the problem of world hunger and poverty calls for a response on the part of governments. They have decided to seek to influence their government leaders on behalf of the hungry.

Bread for the World is constructing the vehicle through which such Christians can add to their gifts for hunger relief the gift of their citizenship. With the help of the national staff, Bread for the World members seek to sharpen their understanding of hunger and its causes, listen to the poor, keep an eye on the hunger situation in various parts of the world, keep abreast of developments at the United Nations, and, most importantly, stay up-to-date on the Washington scene as it relates to the problem of hungry people. Bread for the World provides the mechanism through which Christians can influence the development of national policy on behalf of the world's—and the nation's—hungry.

To accomplish this, Bread for the World issues a concise monthly newsletter which, in addition to providing information, targets specific issues facing Congress or the Administration on which members may wish to express their concern via letters, wires, phone calls or personal visits. From time to time, an urgent situation emerges which cannot await the next newsletter, and a special communication—Quickgram—is rushed to members.



bread for the world

Aid Action Urgently Needed

The strength and effectiveness of Bread for the World resides on the local level. The national staff can provide information and selected targeted legislation and issues, but the action which makes the movement move comes from members and local groups in cities, towns, and rural areas all over the country. It is their voice which is heard in our nation's capital and their active concern which can change the response of a nation to hungry people.

Exercise

1. What is Bread for the World's special focus? Why did it choose to be involved in this area?
2. Do you think people really can make a difference in what kinds of public policies we have? Explain your answer.
3. What are our rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States? Does being a Christian have any special bearing on the way we carry out our responsibilities?
4. Is involvement in something like Bread for the World an essential element in what it means to be a Christian in the world today? Explain your answer.
5. Explain how Bread for the World works.

How It Dares Hope

Can messages from ordinary citizens **really** change decisions in Washington? Emphatically, **YES**—if enough of them are received. On September 25, 1975, Rep. Donald Fraser in the House, D-Minn., and Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., introduced the

"Right-to-Food" resolution. This was a Sense of Congress Resolution which affirmed the right of every person to a nutritionally adequate diet and saw this right as a cornerstone of U.S. policy. Bread for the World, for its part, organized its first major offering of letters in support of this resolution. While there were only 8,000 members in Bread for the World at the time, this movement was able to generate close to 250,000 letters in support of the resolution. Many representatives reported receiving hundreds of letters urging passage of the "Right-to-Food" resolution. By the end of the Second Session of the 95th Congress, both houses had adopted "Right-to-Food" resolutions.

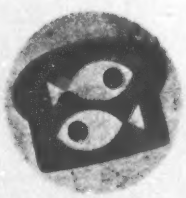
Taking its own cue from the passage of the resolutions and remembering what the World Food Conference had said, the staff of Bread for the World decided to target grain reserves as its next major issue. The creation of a grain reserve would help to avoid future famines and stabilize the price of grain on the market. Many in Congress maintained that there was not the sentiment in this country to support such an idea. Bread for the World remained steadfast, however. This was an important issue. It could get at one of the causes of hunger. It was worth it. Once more, Bread for the World members and those who had heard of the work of Bread for the World took up the pen and wrote their senators and congresspersons advocating a grain reserve. Bread for the World members visited representatives when they came home from Washington, D.C., called their offices before votes were taken, and continued to petition with letters for a grain reserve. By the grace of God, the pressure of grain surpluses, tens of thousands of letters, and months of hard work, the Farm Bill of 1977 contains the provisions for the creation of a grain reserve. Bread for the World members have helped to accomplish something of historic importance.

Bread for the World has helped to make a difference on other issues, as well. Among them have been the food stamp reform, including elimination of the purchase requirement; extension of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs; the "grant back" provision enabling countries that receive food aid to keep repayments when used for small-farm development; the depoliticizing of food assistance; the targeting of more development aid to the very poor. At least as important, however, has been our work to develop the kind of public understanding that will pave the way for major policy improvements in the future.

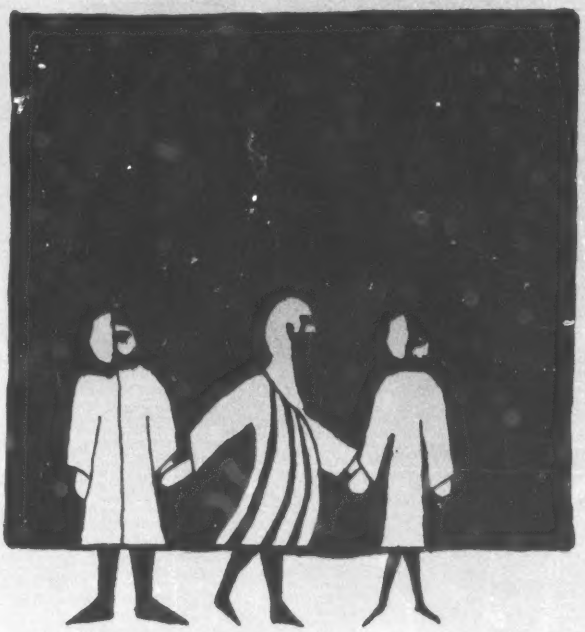
Will enough Christians become citizen advocates for hungry people to significantly change U.S. policies that affect hungry people? We believe they will—if they become convinced that such a response is essential to progress against hunger, and if they understand that response to be prompted by the central events of their faith.

Many people feel that the problem of world hunger is so complex and so enormous that there is little reason for hope. Christians know better. They do not root their hope in the latest U.N. projections, or some social scientist's analysis of how things may turn out in ten or twenty years. Christians root their hope in God and believe that the future is with His Kingdom, and that no efforts consistent with this hope are wasted.

The Christian orientation of Bread for the World does not give its members a special corner on understanding world hunger, nor does it deny the deep concern of many others of other faiths and of no faith. Bread for the World's special calling is to summon people in the Christian churches to act in faith on behalf of hungry people.



12. Living Simply: The Challenge Ahead



Elizabeth Poh

All that we have learned has shown us that there are many possible ways to respond to the cries of the hungry for bread and justice. We have looked at the scope of the problem, some causes and some of the proposed solutions. In this chapter, we will take several of the themes that have appeared in the last few chapters and review them as well as make some suggestions on how to live justly in our world. We'll meet several people who are working, in their own lives, in their own ways, to do their part to change the story of world hunger and poverty. The people in these descriptions are real, ordinary people. So are the projects that they are involved in. They are people like you and me who have decided to work to make a difference. In their individual stories there is an invitation to you to join them.

A Walk for Bread

Lisa is a junior in a high school. Last semester she took a religion course where she learned some of the facts about world hunger. During the spring term, Lisa decided to do something about world hunger. Along with several friends and a member of the faculty, Lisa organized a series of consciousness-raising events and experiences for the students and faculty of the school. A small group of people got interested and asked what they could do. The group decided to organize a walkathon called "A Walk for Bread." People who joined the walkathon pledged to walk twenty miles. They got other people to sponsor their efforts and promise to pay them a certain amount of money for each mile. One hundred and sixty students and eight teachers walked on May 4th. Through their efforts they raised $3,000, which they donated to Bread for the World and Catholic Relief Services.

Exercise

1. What do you think made Lisa act on what she learned about hungry people?
2. Why do you think other people joined in the effort that she started?
3. Why do you think other people did not join her efforts?
4. What kind of projects do you think could happen in your school to help hungry people? What part could you play in that project?

The Power of One Person

Mary Ann is a 26 year old nursing student. She is married and has a four-year old son. A couple of years ago Mary Ann went to an education session on hunger that was held at a local church and was given by one of her friends. After that first meeting she wanted to learn more. She read a book and attended several other educational events. Eventually she started a small group in her own church. During its first year, the group organized a canned food collection and distributed the food to needy families in their area. They also organized a letter writing campaign about food stamps. They got 27 letters. The second year they worked harder at educating people on the public policy issues of hunger and stressed the importance of getting in touch with their representative on these issues. This time they got over 300 letters written on the need for an emergency grain reserve. The letter-writing campaign has become part of the church's regular response to the hungry.

Exercise

1. Has your local church or your high school ever done anything like this?

2. What has been your church's and your school's response to the hunger issue in the past?
3. How do you think Mary Ann felt when she first started out? What made her continue?

A Different Kind of Summer

Jim is a full-time college student who lives in California. During the school year, Jim attended a Bread for the World Educational Fund seminar in his area. He became involved in learning more about how to help the hungry. In one of the Bread for the World newsletters, Jim read about a summer intern program that was being offered for volunteers. The national staff of Bread for the World members was offering housing to people willing to come to New York to work. Jim decided to do this for the summer. He travelled to New York and is living with a Bread for the World coordinator on Staten Island. He is helping to create an educational packet on land reform to be used by people in the churches during the next year.

Exercise

1. How did Jim's decision to volunteer at Bread for the World for the summer help the effort to work against hunger?
2. Jim did not make any money for the summer. What do you think he got out of the experience?
3. How can a high school course on hunger like this one motivate people to become involved with helping hungry people?

A Day of Fast - A Day of Justice

The Christian fellowship of Christ Church decided to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus with a special day which they called "A Day of Fast—A Day of Justice." Forty high school students gathered together on Saturday, April 5th. They decided that they would forego lunch and dinner and spend the day learning something about the problems of hungry people. They had speakers in from various organizations working with hungry people, as well as saw movies and played simulation games on world hunger. Shortly after sundown, they sat down to write letters to their representative in Congress to urge him to support the upcoming Food Stamps Appropriations bill. As the evening drew on, they gathered together to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus in prayer and song. As part of their celebration, they offered the letters they had written earlier. It was part of the way that they affirmed their faith in the Risen Jesus.

Exercise

1. What is the connection between letter-writing efforts and the celebration of Jesus' Resurrection?
2. Read Isaiah 58 and compare the response of those people with that of these high school students.

Making It Happen In Our Own Lives

Here are several other suggestions for you to think about as you consider your response to hungry people:

Study

If this course has proven anything, it is that hunger is a complex reality. A Christian committed to the hungry needs to continue his or her learning and studying. Here are a few suggestions:

Continue to meet on a monthly basis for study, prayer and action. You could start your study together by reading and discussing Arthur Simon's book, **Bread for the World.** This book will further your knowledge and understanding of the things we touched on in this course.

Prayer

There are so many people who are hungry that the elimination of hunger seems almost impossible. Many say that it is beyond our ability to create a world free from hunger and starvation. Christians, however, do not enter this struggle for justice alone. We are confident that with the help of God, we can create a more just world. As we pray daily for the hungry of the world, perhaps we could follow some of the direction offered below:

Everyday bring the reality of hungry people to Our Lord.
Listen to their cry and hear the voice of the Lord.
Try to discern what God is telling us in their voices.
Petition the Lord to liberate those who are captives of riches and selfishness so that the world may more fully realize the Kingdom of God.
Ask God's blessing on those who work among the poor and hungry in the name of Christ.

This is something you can do each day in the quiet of your own hearts. It is also something that we can do as a community, as a church. Keep the cause of the poor and hungry among the prayers of petition in your church. Organize an ecumenical prayer service, bringing together people from various local churches to pray for the hungry.

Support

Another way of showing our on-going support for the hungry and poor is to help the church's own projects among the poor and hungry. Of particular importance are those programs that are helping people to help themselves and to take possession

of their own lives. Your contributions to these programs help to further development of people around the world.

Help

We often think of hunger as a problem that affects people far away. More than likely, there are people who are hungry or inadequately fed in your own area.

Work as a group to find out who the hungry are and how you can help them. Your church might want to start a food pantry or a "Meals on Wheels" program. Or you may volunteer to help in existing programs.

Simplify

When we discussed the causes of hunger, one of the factors that we mentioned was the affluence explosion among the rich nations of the world. We consume far more than is just and fair in an age of hunger and starvation. The challenge before each of us is to find ways to simplify our lives. Consider the following questions:

Discuss the things you need and all the things you have.

What could you do to live more faithfully and justly in the world?

What could you do without so as to share with others who are in need?

Look at your home. What appliances do you have that you could do without? Are dishwashers and electric can openers really necessary? Couldn't we do dishes and open cans without them? What about air conditioners, boats, and Winnebagos? Do we really need them?

How much food do we waste?

What about sharing more and consuming less?

Can we afford to continue to allow ourselves to be co-opted by advertising and commercials?

What are the ways for us to live more in keeping with the style of life that Jesus is calling us to?

Become A Citizen-Advocate For The Poor And Hungry

This course has focused, in part, on the importance of public policy and the role of governments in locking people into hunger and in helping them to get free from its clutches. As citizens of the United States, we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to shape the policies of our country.

The most effective thing you can do is to use the gift of your citizenship for the hungry.

By joining Bread for the World, you join together with over 33,000 other Christians who are trying to affect U.S. policy on hunger and poverty. By becoming part of this movement, you can help to exercise a significant force in the fight against hunger. In addition to considering your own membership in Bread for the World, encourage others to join and to make Bread for the World an ongoing part of the life of the church through its social action or social concerns committee.